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HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE

SINCE 2005

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A-League Round 9 Friday 6th Dec - Sunday 8th Dec 2013

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VICTORY AND JETS TO PLAY IN MILESTONE MATCH

GAME ON NUMBER 1000!

Photo: ANITA MILAS

World Cup Draw fever hits Australia

By Pablo Bateson

At the time of writing, great anticipation and excitement was mounting towards the draw for the biggest event on the planet; the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brasil. The choice of the Costa do Sauipe in Bahia State to host the draw is an interesting one, and perhaps influenced by making sure that all those attending a typically lavish gathering are well looked after in every sense!

There's been a huge amount of speculation right around the world about the possible outcomes in terms of make-up of the eight groups, and Australian media attention is no exception. Big questions have included: How does the draw work? Which of the top seeds in Pot 1 will face the most difficult task? Who will the Socceroos meet?

At 3am AEDT on Saturday 7 December, very many thousands of mostly bleary eyed Australian supporters will have the coffee ready to help sustain them through the SBS TWG live coverage. What would a World Cup draw be without the sublime hosting skills of Les, the cutting analysis and reality checks from Fozz, and Scotty's polish as our Asian football specialist? And we're fortunate to have the views and insights of Jason Culina, one of our stars from the last two WC finals.

With Australia confirmed for Pot 3 only four days out, there are some certainties and the rest just possibilities. Firstly, we will have one of the eight top seeded teams, which include five previous title holders. Secondly, we'll have a team from either Africa or South America. Thirdly we'll have one from Europe that includes three previous tournament winners.

The schedule across all venues with dates, kick off times and group matches was already locked in a year ago, so now it's time for the draw to fit in the specific teams. We can already see from such a schedule that every team will have to play its group games across a wide geographic spread of venues. These cities are characterised by very different climates and even time zones, so the logistical challenges will be much clearer after the draw.

There have been many different opinions and preferences expressed by our fans, officials, media, and players as to who we want the Socceroos to meet in the group. My own dream would be for us to get Spain from Pot 1, and failing that then Argentina or Brasil. At the ultimate World Cup you want to test yourself against the very best. Algeria would be nice from Pot 2 and England from Pot 4. Many would be quietly confident of being able to beat either of the latter two, and remembering that last game versus England in London, 2003.

Whatever happens early on Saturday, expect lots of analysis and we'll be providing a comprehensive post draw review in the next edition of Goal Weekly.

Twitter @PabloFootball

FIFA announced the procedure for the Final Draw for the 2014 FIFA World Cup during the week with Australia to be drawn from Pot 3, alongside Asian counterparts South Korea, Iran and Japan, as well as CONCACAF nations USA, Mexico, Costa Rica and Honduras.

Pot Luck

Pot 1	Pot 3
1 Brazil	1 Australia
2 Argentina	2 Iran
3 Colombia	3 Japan
4 Uruguay	4 Korea Republic
5 Belgium	5 Costa Rica
6 Germany	6 Honduras
7 Spain	7 Mexico
8 Switzerland	8 USA
Pot 2	**Pot 4**
1 Algeria	1 Bosnia-Herzeg.
2 Cameroon	2 Croatia
3 Côte d'Ivoire	3 England
4 Ghana	4 France
5 Nigeria	5 Greece
6 Chile	6 Italy
7 Ecuador	7 Netherlands
	8 Portugal
	9 Russia

FIFA WORLD CUP Brasil

2014 FIFA World Cup Final Draw is LIVE 2:45am AEDT Saturday 7 December on SBS ONE, repeated 5:30pm on SBS ONE.

Matildas drawn with world champions Japan for AFC Women's Asian Cup 2014

The Westfield Matildas' pathway to Asian glory has been laid out following the draw for the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2014.

The Westfield Matildas will be looking to retain the crown they won in 2010 – to date the only Asian title won by a male or female Australian team at any level – when they tackle the continent's best next May in Vietnam.

The four semi-finalists alongside the fifth-placed team will qualify for the FIFA Women's World Cup Canada 2015.

The draw in Ho Chi Minh City saw the Westfield Matildas paired with world champions Japan, host nation Vietnam and Jordan in Group A.

The latter pair won through to the tournament after winning their respective groups in the previous stage of qualifying.

The Westfield Matildas and Japan qualified automatically having finished in the top-four at the 2010 edition of the tournament.

The Westfield Matildas defeated Japan 1-0 in the semi-final before winning the Asian crown with a penalty shoot-out victory against Korea DPR in the final. Japan went on to win the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup in Germany.

The two nations have met 20 times with the Westfield Matildas winning five and Japan eight of the matches.

The Westfield Matildas have defeated Vietnam on both occasions they have met, while they are yet to face Jordan at a full international.

"I think it is a very exciting group with the holders of the Asian cup, the world champions and the host all in one group," said Westfield Matildas coach Hesterine de Reus.

"I think we have a good draw, playing Japan first, and after that Vietnam and Jordan.

"I'm happy with having Japan first as the strongest team so we will be totally fit and ready for the start of the tournament.

"After that we have two teams which, on paper, we are the better side, but at the top level easy matches do not exist anymore and they will not be easy opponents."

The Matildas will defend their Asian Cup title in Vietnam in May next year.

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A-League reaches milestone 1000th game

The Hyundai A-League celebrates a significant milestone on Sunday when Melbourne Victory and Newcastle Jets play the 1000th A-League game (AAMI Park, kick off 5pm).

The Hyundai A-League burst into life on Friday 26 August 2005 when Newcastle Jets hosted Adelaide United at Energy Australia Stadium (now Hunter Stadium).

Adelaide United striker and former Socceroo Carl Veart scored the first A-League goal to deliver the first three points to the Reds with a 1-0 win.

In keeping with the Hyundai A-League's commitment to "Put the fans first", A-League official partner Hankook Tyres will offer prizes for two lucky fans attending Sunday's match;

- the 1000th purchaser of an online ticket
- the 1000th fan to enter AAMI Park

Both winners will receive $1,000 worth of tyres thanks to Hankook Tyres.

Head of the Hyundai A-League Damien de Bohun heralded the 1000th match as another sign of the competition's growing stature.

"The A-League was an ambitious start-up in 2005, but 1000 games later the competition is entrenched in the sporting landscape in Australia," said de Bohun.

"There's still a huge buzz around the A-League and the astonishing growth trajectory of the early days is once again the trend.

"Over nine seasons, A-League clubs have attracted over 10 million fans, competed with distinction in Asia and become popular in Australian households thanks to world-class live TV coverage. It all adds up to a competition that's on the move with an exciting outlook."

Melbourne Victory Head Coach Kevin Muscat said he was thrilled Melbourne Victory was able to host the Hyundai A-League's 1000th clash.

"We as a club are very proud to be hosting this historic match at AAMI Park, a venue built for football," Muscat said.

"It's amazing to see how far the Hyundai A-League has come in just nine seasons. There have been plenty of successes and wonderful stories over the years and we are delighted to have played our part in making this league what it is today."

How Time Flies: The year is 2005 and new football launches the A-League at the Melbourne Exhibition Building. Recognise the faces? Ernie Merrick, Pierre Litbarski, John O'Neil and Matt Carroll.

The 1000 Club

1000th goal: Carlos Hernandez, for Melbourne Victory v Brisbane Roar, Etihad Stadium, 15 August 2009 (33rd minute)

1000th outfield goal*: Labinot Haliti, for Newcastle Jets v Melbourne Victory, EnergyAustralia Stadium, 18 October 2009 (22nd minute)
*excluding penalty goals

1000th 1st half goal: Tiago Calvano, for Newcastle Jets v Perth Glory, nib Stadium, 3 November 2012 (11th minute)

1000th 2nd half goal: Mitch Nichols, for Brisbane Roar v Gold Coast United, Suncorp Stadium, 21 October 2011 (78th minute)

1000th yellow card: Liam Reddy, for Brisbane Roar v Sydney FC, Suncorp Stadium, 8 February 2008 (74th minute)

1000th card (any colour): Michael Theo, for Melbourne Victory v Central Coast Mariners, Bluetongue Stadium, 31 December 2007 (yellow card, 74th minute)

1000th match: Melbourne Victory v Newcastle Jets, AAMI Park, 8 December 2013
(8 years 104 days, or 3026 days, after first match - Newcastle Jets v Adelaide United, EnergyAustralia Stadium, 26 August 2005

1000th second: during Newcastle Jets v Adelaide United, EnergyAustralia Stadium, 26 August 2005

1000th minute: during Newcastle Jets v Sydney FC, EnergyAustralia Stadium, 11 September 2005

1000th hour: during Brisbane Roar v Gold Coast United, Suncorp Stadium, 12 February 2011

GOAL! WEEKLY

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Jean-Paul de Marigny joins Victory coaching staff

Melbourne Victory has boosted its coaching ranks, with the highly experienced Jean-Paul de Marigny joining the club as Kevin Muscat's Assistant Coach.

de Marigny was most recently the coach of New South Wales Premier League side Marconi Stallions and has also had stints at the Newcastle Jets and Sydney United Football Club, as well as being an assistant coach for the Australian Under 17s side in 2007 and 2008.

Muscat said de Marigny was a welcome addition to his coaching staff.

"I am thrilled to be able to have Jean-Paul join us as an assistant coach and I'm very much looking forward to having him commence as soon as possible," Muscat said.

"Jean-Paul will be a great addition to our team and I know the players and the staff will benefit enormously from having him at the club.

"We've essentially been a man down since Ange's (Postecoglou) departure and the entire coaching team have done a superb job assisting me in these past few weeks, but we certainly needed an extra pair of hands. We are all very much looking forward to working with Jean-Paul for the remainder of this A-League season, as well as in the lead up to our upcoming Asian Champions League qualifying campaign."

The 49-year-old Australian has coached and helped develop several high-profile Australian players during his coaching tenures, including Mile Jedinak, James Holland, Dean Bouzanis and Nicky Carle, to name just a few.

de Marigny Fact File

Date of Birth: 21-Jan-1964
Place of Birth: Mauritius
Position: Defender

Socceroo Honours
Total - 3 app. 0 gls.
1987 - Taiwan
1990 - Hajduk Split, South Korea

de Marigny said he was thrilled to be returning to the Hyundai A-League coaching scene.

"I am very excited about coming to Melbourne and working with the biggest club in Australia," de Marigny said.

"Kevin and I have already had in-depth discussions about what this role will entail and given the excellent state of the club's squad and the high calibre of players on the list, I have no doubt the club is primed for success and I look forward to being part of that."

de Marigny started in his new role with Melbourne Victory on Monday, December 2.

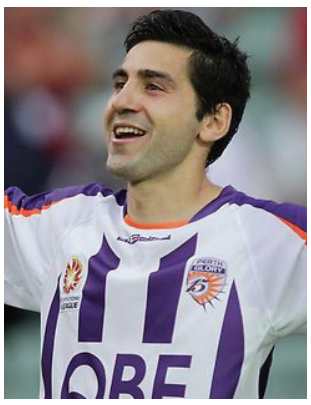
PANTELIDIS TO LEAVE PERTH GLORY

Perth Glory confirms that Steve Pantelidis will be leaving the club to play for Malaysian Super League team Selangor FC.

Steve Pantelidis joined Perth Glory at the start of the 2011 Hyundai A-League season and has more than 140 Hyundai A-league appearances to his name, playing in five finals campaigns with three different clubs, and winning a championship with Melbourne Victory in 2006/07. Steve went on to establish himself as a key member of the Perth Glory team in the 2011 Hyundai A-League season, going on to start in 24 of 27 matches and fast becoming popular amongst his fellow team mates and Glory fans alike. His versatility and no-nonsense style of defending, established Steve as an integral member of the Perth Glory team that reached the 2012 Grand Final where they were controversially beaten by Brisbane Roar.

Perth Glory Head Coach Alistair Edwards had nothing but praise for the 30-year-old defender.

"Steve has been a great servant to Perth Glory over the past two years. We were in talks to extend his contract further, however we had also received significant interest from a number of clubs in Asia for him. There is increasing money going into football in Asia and the Malaysian League is fast attracting a number of overseas players. As a Club we do not want to stand in the way of player seeking to pursue overseas aspirations, and as such we'd like to thank Steve for his commitment and professionalism at Perth Glory. We wish him well in his future endeavours."



Steve Pantelidis joins up with former Melbourne Victory coach Mehmet Durakovic who recently took the reins at Selangor FC. Durakovic had a highly-successful playing career with Selangor, winning the Malaysia Cup in three successive years between 1995 to 1997. The signing of Steve Pantelidis is his first major player signing since joining the Club.

Steve will leave for Kuala Lumpur later this week and will not be available for selection for Perth Glory's upcoming Round 9 match against Wellington Phoenix at 6.45pm on Friday night at nib Stadium.

SMELTZ INJURY UPDATE

Perth Glory can confirm Shane Smeltz will miss up to four weeks after sustaining ligament damage to his ankle during the club's 1-0 loss to Brisbane on the weekend. Scans were taken in Brisbane following the match on Sunday morning and revealed a torn

Taggart named NAB Player of the Month

Football Federation Australia (FFA) and NAB, together with the Newcastle Jets are proud to announce Jets striker Adam Taggart as the NAB Young Footballer of the Year nominee for the month of November.

Taggart was voted as the Hyundai A-League's most outstanding U-21 player for the month of November after hitting a rich vein of goal-scoring form that sees him leading the race for the competition's Golden Boot award.

The Young Socceroo found the back of the net on six occasions during November, coinciding with a run of three consecutive wins for the Jets.

"It's been a good month for me personally, but the most important thing is that the team has been doing really well," Taggart said.

"A lot of the credit has to go to the players around me who have provided me with good service and great support throughout this month."

Taggart scored in the Jets' 2-1 win over Adelaide United in Round 5, before bagging a brace as the Jets defeated Brisbane Roar 2-1 in Round 6.

The 20-year-old capped off a stellar month with a hat-trick of sublimely taken goals in the Jets' 3-1 win over Melbourne Heart in Round 7.

"I think scoring goals has a lot to do with your mindset and staying positive and that was the most important thing for me after not scoring in the first few games of the season," Taggart said.

"I just tried to keep my mind on the task, not drop my head and make sure I was ready for the next chance.

"After I scored the first one I was able to get on a nice little roll and like all strikers I want to try and continue that for as long as I can."

Taggart is the second nominee for the annual award along with Trent Sainsbury of the Central Coast Mariners (October). The pair will be joined by four other nominees to be in the running for the grand prize.

NAB has generously donated a $1,500 equipment pack and $1,000 in a NAB Community Saver Account to Adam's chosen junior club.

The overall winner of the NAB Young Footballer of the Year Award 2013/14 will receive a $10,000 NAB personal investment portfolio, along with a NAB Private Client Manager to assist with a range of banking and financial services.

SCOREBOARD

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Brisbane Roar	8	6	0	2	15	5	10	18
2 Western Sydney Wanderers	8	4	3	1	9	6	3	15
3 Sydney FC	8	5	0	3	11	10	1	15
4 Melbourne Victory	8	3	3	2	11	8	3	12
5 Newcastle Jets	8	3	3	2	9	9	0	12
6 Central Coast Mariners	7	2	4	1	8	7	1	10
7 Perth Glory	8	2	3	3	6	8	-2	9
8 Adelaide United	8	1	3	4	11	15	-4	6
9 Wellington Phoenix	7	0	4	3	6	9	-3	4
10 Melbourne Heart	8	0	3	5	6	15	-9	3

THIS WEEK

Round 9	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Dec 6	Adelaide United v Brisbane Roar	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00 PM	7:30 PM
Fri Dec 6	Perth Glory v Wellington Phoenix	NIB stadium	6:45 PM	9:45 PM
Sat Dec 7	West Sydney Wanderers v Melbourne Heart	Parramatta Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Dec 7	Central Coast Mariners v Sydney FC	Bluetongue Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Dec 8	Melbourne Victory v Newcastle Jets	AAMI Park	5:00 PM	5:00 PM

NEXT WEEK

Round 10	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Dec 13	Melbourne Victory v Perth Glory	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Dec 14	Wellington Phoenix v Brisbane Roar	Westpac Stadium	5:30 PM	3:30 PM
Sat Dec 14	Adelaide United v Central Coast Mariners	Hindmarsh Stadium	5:00 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Dec 14	Newcastle Jets v West Sydney Wanderers	Hunter Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Dec 15	Sydney FC v Melbourne Heart	Allianz Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM

ROUND EIGHT

Wellington Phoenix 0
Western Sydney Wanderers 0
Crowd @ Westpac Stadium 7,147

Sydney FC 2
(Chianese 45+1, Despotovic 60)
Newcastle Jets 0
Crowd: 14,803

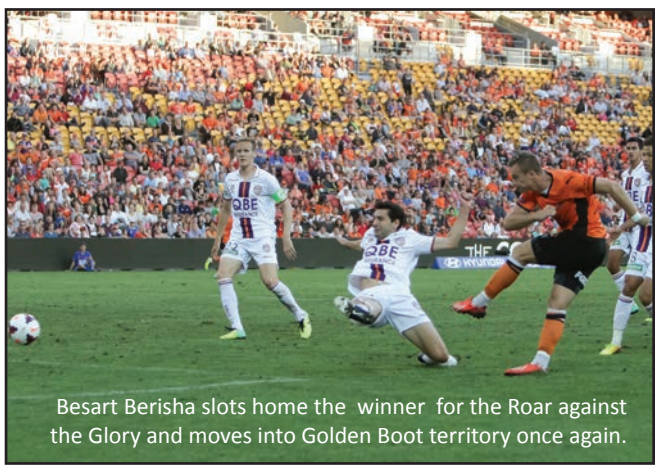
Brisbane Roar 1 (Berisha 57)
Perth Glory 0
Crowd: 12,308 @Suncorp Stadium

Central Coast Mariners 0
Melbourne Victory 0
Crowd: 5,787 @ Bluetongue Stadium, Gosford

Melbourne Heart FC 3 (Andrea Migliorini 54', 65' David Williams 70' [PEN])
Adelaide United FC 3 (Steven Lustica 2', Sergio Cirio 15', Marcelo Carrusca 76')
Crowd: 6,002 @ AAMI Park, Melb

TOP GOAL SCORERS

06
Adam Taggart (Jets)
05
James Troisi (Victory)
04
Henrique (Roar
03
Alessandro Del Piero (SFC)
Matthew Smith (Roar)
Marcos Flores (Mariners)
Jeronimo Neumann (Adelaide Utd)
Ryo Nagai (Glory)
Archie Thompson (Victory)
Joel Chianese (Sydney FC)
Besart Berisha (Roar)
David Williams (Heart)
02
Tomi Juric (Wanderers)
Mitchell Duke (Mariners)
Fabio Farriera (Adelaide)
Andrew Durante (Phoenix)



Besart Berisha slots home the winner for the Roar against the Glory and moves into Golden Boot territory once again.

A-LEAGUE TEAM OF THE WEEK Round 8

Follow Steven Talevski on twitter @steventalevski.

Compiled by Steven Talevski

Andrea Migliorini takes the shirt off his back for the Melbourne Heart cause.

This weekend was all about solid defences as six clubs kept clean sheets while only one game saw more than two goals hit the back of the net.
Brisbane Roar stayed on top through a Besart Berisha goal against the Glory while Sydney's two nil victory over the Jets moved them to equal points with second placed Western Sydney.
The weekend ended with a stunning 3-3 draw between Adelaide and Melbourne Heart while clashes between Melbourne Victory and Central Coast along with the Phoenix and Wanderers ended in scoreless draws.
Here is our team of the week:

GK: Liam Reddy – Reddy was once again at his best on the weekend keeping out a rampant Melbourne Victory side. Reddy kept a clean sheet and allowed the Mariners to walk away with a point against an impressive Victory.

RB: Storm Roux – The New Zealand international was the standout in Mariners colours on Friday night as the youngster made clearance after clearance as the Victory attempted to break down the Mariners defence. Roux also offered plenty of positivity going forward.

CB: Matt Smith – Brisbane Roar's captain led his side to another solid win to extend their lead on top of the table. Smith's defensive work and leadership allowed for the Roar to pick up a one nil victory against the Glory.

CB: Nikola Petkovic – Another Serbian in Ranko Despotovic may have stolen the headlines on Saturday, however it was Nikola Petkovic's ground work in defence that allowed the sky blues to pick up all three points. Playing against the inform Adam Taggart, Petkovic controlled the Sydney backline that was able to be one of six teams to keep a clean sheet.

LB: Manny Muscat – Back in his old position of full back, Muscat was fantastic against a Wanderers attack that included Youssouf Hersi. Muscat stood strong in defence and offered something on the counter when called upon.

CDM: Andrea Migliorini – The Italian gave the A-League not one glimpse, but two, as he finally showed that he could smash a ball into the back of the net. Migliorini's goals brought the Heart back in the lead before being substituted.

CDM: Luke Brattan – As always, Brattan anchored the Roar midfield with precise passing and enormous defensive work effort. The young midfielder continues to receive plaudits and is in the sights of Graham Arnold who may bring the roar midfielder to Japan.

RAM: Kosta Barbarouses – Barbarouses was the pick of the Victory attackers this week that did all but find the back of the net. Barbarouses makes Goal! Weekly's team of the week for the second round straight.

CAM: Marcelo Carrusca – The Argentinian got himself on the score sheet with a late free kick against the Heart. However it was his attacking movement and passing that caught the eye this weekend as the Reds picked up a point away from home.

LAM: Thomas Broich – The German was in fine form against Perth on Saturday. Broich began a number of Roar attacks which was highlighted by his assist for Besart Berisha.

ST: Besart Berisha – Brisbane's number 7 is back to his best after an injury at the start of the season. Berisha scored the sole goal against the Glory as speculation begins about his future.

Star Man: Andrea Migliorini – Signed as an injury replacement for Orlando Engelaar, Migliorini has not disappointed for the Heart by anchoring their midfield from the start of the season. The Italian showcased his shooting power on the weekend scoring two goals of the season contenders before being surprisingly substituted by John Aloisi. Migliorini's double on the weekend may have just turned the Heart's season around.

Coach: Frank Farina – What a turnaround it has been for the Sky Blues. Now sitting on equal points with Western Sydney Wanderers, the Sky blues could be on top of the A-League table at the end of the next round if results fall their way. Farina's signing of Ranko Despotovic looks like a gem as the Serbian has scored in two straight wins. After being named coach of the week in round 1, Sydney had a string of disappointing loss, but Farina has brought his squad together and now seems to be serious Finals contenders.

Mariners to Become Nomads?

Central Coast

0

Melbourne Victory

0

Match Details

Central Coast Mariners 0
Melbourne Victory 0
Bluetongue Stadium, Gosford
Attendance: 5,787
Referee: Kris Griffiths-Jones

Central Coast Mariners: 12. Liam Reddy (Gk), 3. Joshua Rose, 6. Brent Griffiths, 7. John Hutchinson (C), 9. Mitchell Duke, 10. Marcos Flores (21. Mile Sterjovskji 85'), 14. Michael Mcglinchey, 15. Storm Roux, 16. Trent Sainsbury, 17. Anthony Caceres (8. Nick Montgomery 73'), 19. Matt Simon (2. Daniel Mcbreen 61')

Substitutes Not Used: 1. Justin Pasfield (Gk), 4. Marcel Seip
Yellow Cards: Griffiths, Simon, Sainsbury, Mcbreen
Red Cards: Nil

Melbourne Victory: 1. Nathan Coe (Gk), 2. Pablo Contreras, 3. Adama Traore, 4. Nicholas Ansell, 5. Mark Milligan (C), 9. Kosta Barbarouses, 10. Archie Thompson (7. Guilherme Finkler 74'), 14. James Troisi, 15. Mitchell Nichols (11. Connor Pain 66'), 16. Rashid Mahazi,

Substitutes Not Used: 17. James Jeggo, 20. Lawrence Thomas (Gk), 24. Scott Galloway
Yellow Cards: Traore, Milligan, Contreras
Red Cards:

By Adrian Dean

Mariners fans were bemused this week by headlines suggesting their beloved team was negotiating to play a large number of its home games at North Sydney Oval – a kind of homecoming to some, given the links between the original Mariners personnel and Northern Spirit. The headlines were denounced by owner Mike Charlesworth but only after the FFA advised that North Sydney Oval would require millions of dollars worth of upgrades to take regular (as opposed to occasional) A-League matches.

The Mariners continue to lose money, albeit not as much as most clubs, so the league needs to keep owners happy. But they also need to keep fans happy and the surest way to annoy the fans is to move their team. That may explain the much lower than usual attendance for a game that is usually very popular on the Coast. Mariners fans always turn out in numbers for the visit of Victory – of course, it did rain heavily before the game.

I got one thing right and two things wrong in my preview to this game. I picked a draw, but I suggested it was going to be about the potent Victory attack versus the superbly organised Mariners defence. Instead, it was the Mariners just hanging on while the Victory missed chance after chance. The best two players according to my judgment were Trent Sainsbury and Liam Reddy, which gives an indication of where the drama was played out.

Both coaches are brand new after long apprenticeships and both will take some positives out of the game. Victory held the ball well and worked into dangerous positions – the Mariners scrambled desperately – but both were missing their usual mojo, which will be a concern for both coaches following in the footsteps of giants.

The Mariners, in particular, looked ineffective going forward and were unable to hold possession. The Mariners need McGlinchey on the ball with time and space in order to set up Marcos Flores and the wide men. That wasn't happening, so Flores was largely a passenger. Phil Moss will need to be quickly on the phone to Arnie to work out what's going wrong, although he'll do so nervously. The rumour mill suggests Arnie may be angling to take one or two problems off the Mariners' hands.

Despite missing a couple of chances, Mark Milligan had another good game for Victory and looks very established as a senior player bashing the door down for the Socceroos. But Milligan wasn't the only waster of chances in a blue shirt. Troisi should have scored in the 34th minute but dithered long enough to allow Brent Griffiths to block. Archie Thompson, even on a good night, is way too wasteful for my money – he seems to snatch at chances rather than put them away with the ruthless dispassion of (say) Besart Berisha. On a bad night he's a waste of a shirt. He missed a simple header on 50 minutes and just shortly afterwards had team mates begging for the ball but went himself.

The game may have turned out very differently if Mitch Nichols had not been called offside early. Victory seem to need a settling goal and may well have gone on with it. But in the end they might be thankful for a point. With just a couple of minutes to go, Daniel McBreen was flagged offside as he put the ball past Coe. It was line ball – which should be regarded as onside – but defeat would have been hard on Victory who dominated most of the game.

So honours even, but Phil Moss will be deeply concerned about his team's inability to hold possession and get out of their third.

For Victory, it's simply a matter of shooting practice.

Adrian Deans is the author of Mr Cleansheets and more recently Straight Jacket – published by High Horse Books and available in all good book stores. www.adriandeans.com

Close, but no cigar: James Troisis laments another close chance gone begging.

Match Stats

29	Tackles	21
5	Total Shots	12
433	Total Passes	501
46.8%	Possession	53.2%
3	Corners	8
1	Offsides	5
12	Fouls committed	13

Man of the Match
Trent Sainsbury (Mariners)

Mark Milligan skipper closes in on Matt Simon.

Kostaas Barbarouses tries to avoid the close attention of Marcos Flores.

Photos: ADRIAN GAGLIONE

Roar in Charge as Berisha Strikes Again

Brisbane Roar 1

Perth Glory 0

Match Details

Brisbane Roar 1
(Besart Berisha 57')
Perth Glory 0
Saturday, 30 November 2013
Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane
Referee: Tim Mcgilchrist
Crowd: 12,308

Brisbane Roar: 2. Matthew Smith (C), 5. Ivan Franjic, 7. Besart Berisha (29. Kwame Yeboah 71'), 10. Henrique (23. Dimitri Petratos 80'), 15.James Donachie, 17. Matt Mckay, 18. Luke Brattan, 19. Jack Hingert, 20.Matthew Acton (Gk), 22. Thomas Broich, 26. Corey Brown

Substitutes Not Used: 14.Diogo Ferreira, 28. Brandon Borrello, 33. Fraser Chalmers (Gk)
Yellow Cards: Matt Mckay 39', Besart Berisha 45+3', Corey Brown 50'
Red Cards: Nil

Perth Glory: 1. Daniel Vukovic (Gk), 2. Jack Clisby (25. Riley Woodcock 77'), 4. Ryan Edwards, 5. Steve Pantaledis, 6. Cameron Edwards, 8. Ryo Nagai, 9. Shane Smeltz (17. Chris Harold 35'), 10. Jamie Maclaren, 14. Steven Mcgarry, 16. Sidnei Sciola Moraes, 23. Michael Thwaite

Substitutes Not Used: 3. Brandon O'neill, 18. Jack Duncan (Gk), 24. Matthew Davies,
Yellow Cards: Ryan Edwards 33', Jack Clisby 40', Steve Panteldis 85'
Red Cards: Nil

By Jarod Ellis

Brisbane extended their lead at the top of the A-League table with a 1-0 win over Perth Glory on Saturday afternoon. A solitary goal from Besart Berisha proved enough to separate the two sides as Brisbane laboured to break down a resolute Glory.

Playing an unfamiliar 3-5-2 formation Perth Glory looked to flood the midfield and break up Brisbane's passing game. It worked up to a point, restricting Brisbane's goal scoring opportunities but ultimately Alistair Edwards' tactical nous wasn't enough to contain the irrepressible Berisha.

Edwards' choice of formation wasn't the only change he had to make since last week's match against Central Coast. Jacob Burns, Scott Jamieson and William Gallas were all unavailable for the Glory through a combination of suspension and injury.

Any side without three of their most important players would struggle and given Brisbane's whirlwind performance against Wanderers last time out Roar fans were expecting their side to put on a clinic.

Brisbane indeed started the stronger, the first fifteen minutes belonged entirely to the home side, Berisha, Henrique and Thomas Broich all found themselves in threatening positions only to fail to capitalise on the opportunity.

Perth threatened on the break through Jaime Maclaren, quick transitions from defence to attack looked to catch Brisbane out but provided few results early on.

Broich tested Danny Vukovic in the 25th minute, some good inter-play from Hingert and Henrique on the right made enough space for Broich in the centre. The German pulled the ball onto his right foot for a shot from the edge of the area but the Perth keeper did well to pluck the ball from the air.

Berisha then came extremely close to giving his side the lead in the 39th minute as a corner from Henrique found Berisha in the middle of the Glory penalty area. The ball dropped invitingly allowing for Berisha to pull off a spin and shot but despite having plenty of power behind the ball the shot was too close to Vukovic who collected the ball once more.

Brisbane had well and truly been on top for the first half but it was Perth that finished the stronger and ultimately came closest to breaking the deadlock in the first forty-five.

Michael Thwaite almost put Perth into the lead, a header from a corner in first half injury time seemed destined for the corner of the net, but Luke Brattan, stationed on the far post, was able to clear and ensured that both sides went into the break level at 0-0.

After having threatened in the first half Berisha finally unlocked the Perth defence in the 57th minute. Receiving a pass from Broich in the penalty area, Berisha shimmied past a challenge from Steve Pantaledis and slotted past Vukovic for what was his 38th goal in sixty appearances for the club.

Glory's best chances in the second half fell to Maclaren. The first arrived in the 69th minute when Chris Harold managed to find Maclaren inside the 18-yard box but the Young Socceroos striker was unable to beat Roar's debutant goalkeeper Matthew Acton. His second chance came in the 73rd minute, but his powerful left-foot shot was well saved by Acton.

Kwame Yeboah had been introduced shortly beforehand for Berisha and it didn't take long for him to cause the crowd to edge forward on their seats. Yeboah found himself perfectly positioned to meet an in-swinging Broich cross but as was so often the case over the ninety-minutes the Brisbane striker's shot was too close to Vukovic.

"There's no easy game in the A-League," Mike Mulvey said after his side held on for the 1-0 win.

"It's our home ground and we have to make the running. They came with a plan and a way that they wanted to play and we had to break them down.

"You only need one goal to win this game and I was exceptionally pleased with our defensive performance.

Besart Berisha is on target for the Roar after wiggling his way in the box and scoring from close range.

Match Stats

20	Tackles	21
22	Total Shots	5
492	Total Passes	251
64.6%	Possession	35.4%
7	Corners	9
2	Offsides	2
14	Fouls committed	16

Man of the Match
Luke Brattan (Roar)

Luke Brattan sends Sidnei Moraes flying after tangling in a tackle.

Roar captain Matt Smith manages to leap highest and meets the ball in the air.

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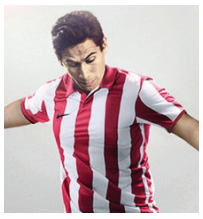
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Ibrahimovic

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AUSTRALIA'S 2013 NUMBER ONE NIKE TEAM WEAR SUPPLIER

Neymar

Thiago Silva

Photos: GEOFF JONES

Sky Blues make it an awesome foursome

Sydney FC 2
Newcastle Jets 0

Match Details

Sydney FC 2 (Chianese 45+1', Despotovic 60')
Newcastle Jets 0

Ground: Allianz Stadium
Crowd: 14,803
Referee: Ben Williams

Sydney FC: 20. V.Janjetovic, 2. S.Ryall, 5. M.Jurman, 6. N.Petkovic, 10. A. Del Piero (43' R.Despotovic), 11. R.Garcia, 16. J.Chianese, 19. N.Carle, 22. A.Abbas, 27. C.Naumoff (67' Y.Yau), 28. M.Thompson (76' T.McFlynn).

Unused Subs: 1. I.Necevski, 34. A.Calver.

Yellow Cards: 4' N.Carle, 43' A. Del Piero, 78' M.Jurman

Newcastle Jets FC: 1. M.Birighitti, 2. S.Neville, 3. T.Regan, 4. K.Jaliens, 5. B.Kantarovski, 7. A.Hoole (73' J.Virgili) , 8. R.Zadkovich, 9. E.Heskey (57' J.Brillante), 10. N.Burns, 16. J.Pepper (79' M.Bridges), 22. A.Taggart.

Unused Subs: 18. J.Brown, 20. B.Kennedy.

By Bryson Ferreira

Most coaches don't put too much emphasis on statistics, but it's safe to say Frank Farina might have quick glance at the record books at some stage this week.

After a horror start to the season with three points in the opening month which included three losses in a row, the Sky Blues have now achieved a club record four wins on the trot.

The game of football is full of highs, lows, and most inevitably turning points that at certain times, can change the outlook of a season and fortunes of a struggling side.

That turning point for Sydney FC came four weeks ago, while 2-1 up but down to 10 men against a Melbourne Victory side sensing blood.

Despite their numerical advantage, the Victory were unable to put an understrength and under-fire Sydney FC team to bed, a result that has since galvanized the Sky Blues.

Three weeks later and Sydney FC sit third on the ladder, equal on points with their Western rivals and three points from table toppers, Brisbane Roar.

Goals in each half from Joel Chianese and Ranko Despotovic against the Jets on Saturday night handed Frank Farina's men the win, with Chianese's opener Sydney FC's 300th Hyundai A-League goal.

Farina made two changes to the side that snatched the three points in the thriller against the Wellington Phoenix last weekend.

Matthew Jurman came in to replace the suspended Pedj Bojic for his first start in a Sky Blue jersey, while Matt Thompson made his return in place of the injured Brett Emerton.

The Jets had marquee man Emile Heskey back as he returned to link up with in-form striker Adam Taggart, while Kew Jaliens returned to defence after missing the Jets previous fixture through suspension.

The home team started slowly as neither side could retain possession early on as the game was battled out in midfield.

Ruben Zadkovich had the game's first sight at goal in the 9th minute when he curled a free kick over from 30 yards out.

Sydney FC's brightest outlet in attack was Joel Chianese as he broke the Jets' defensive line on numerous occasions down the right flank.

The Jets best chance of the half came in the 19th minute after Taggart was played in.

Some last ditch defending from in-form Seb Ryall and some fine goalkeeping from Janjetovic kept the Jets' at bay on more than one occasion, while Sydney FC began to dictate possession midway through the half.

The Sydney FC crowd was on the edge of their seats in the 43rd minute as Alessandro Del Piero limped off with a hamstring injury, replaced by last week's hero Ranko Despotovic who took his place at the head of the Sky Blue's attacking trio.

On the stroke of halftime however, Sydney FC took the lead.

Ali Abbas drove into the Jets' half before sending a well-weighted cross into the box, where Joel Chianese expertly controlled the ball on the penalty spot and fired a neatly placed shot past Birighitti with his left foot.

The Jets' squandered the best opportunity of the match moments later when Nathan Burns fired over from inside the penalty area after Kantarovski's cut back found him unmarked, a moment that proved a turning point in the match.

In the 60th minute Frank Farina's new super-sub Ranko Despotovic confirmed himself as the Sydney FC crowd's new fan favourite.

The Serbian collected the ball deep in the Jets' half before driving forward, beating three Jets' players in the process and unleashing a low curling effort that beat Birighitti at his near post.

From that point on, the Sky Blues controlled the game, despite the Jets having several opportunities to get themselves back in the contest.

With several quality players to return, and a system that still needs some fine-tuning, Sydney FC will be looking to build on what is now an excellent start to the season.

Coaching staff and fans will be sweating on the fitness of captain Alessandro Del Piero this week, but the men in Sky Blue proved last week they are more than capable of winning without their Italian superstar.

Sydney FC make it four wins on the trot after dispatching an in-form Newcastle Jts.

Match Stats

17	Tackles	13
11	Total Shots	13
438	Total Passes	342
55.3%	Possession	44.7%
5	Corners	4
1	Offsides	3
12	Fouls committed	16

Man of the Match
Richard Garcia (Sydney FC)

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SETANTA SPORTS

SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER
Scottish Premiership Round 15 Motherwell v Celtic 6:40am LIVE
Bundesliga Round 15 Nuremburg v Mainz 8:50am 1st Airing
Copa Sudamericana Final 1st Leg Highlights Show 12:30pm 1st Airing
Sky Bet Championship Round 20 Derby v Blackpool 11:10pm LIVE

SUNDAY 8TH DECEMBER
Sky Bet Championship Round 20 Brighton v Leicester 1:55am LIVE
Bundesliga Round 15 Dortmund v Leverksusen 4:25am LIVE
Bundesliga Round 15 Werder Bremen v Bayern Munich 6:30am 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 15 Monchengladbach v Schalke 8:20am 1st Airing

MONDAY 9TH DECEMBER
Bundesliga Round 15 Freiburg v Wolfsburg 4:00am 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 15 Braunschweig v Hertha Berlin 5:50am 1st Airing
Primera Division Round 19 Teams TBC 8:10am LIVE
Primera Division Round 19 Teams TBC 11:10am LIVE
Bundesliga Round 15 Highlights Show 7:00pm 1st Airing
Sky Bet Championship Round 20 Highlights Show 9:50pm 1st Airing

TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER
Scottish Premiership Round 15 Highlights Show 7:30pm 1st Airing

THURSDAY 12TH DECEMBER
Copa Sudamericana Final 2nd Leg Teams TBC 10:40am LIVE

FRIDAY 13TH DECEMBER
UEFA Europa League Matchday 6 St Gallen v Sawnsea 4:50am LIVE
UEFA Europa League Matchday 6 Tottenham v Anzhi 6:55am LIVE
UEFA Europa League Matchday 6 Dynamo Kiev v Rapid Vienna 9:00am 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 16 Preview Show 7:00pm 1st Airing
UEFA Europa League Matchday 6 Highlights Show 7:30pm 1st Airing

SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER
Bundesliga Round 16 Hertha Berlin v Werder Bremen 6:25am LIVE
Copa Sudamericana Final 2nd Leg Highlights Show 12:10pm 1st Airing
Sky Bet Championship Round 21 Leicester v Burnley 11:10pm LIVE

SUNDAY 15TH DECEMBER
Sky Bet Championship Round 21 Blackpool v QPR 1:55am LIVE
Scottish Premiership Round 16 Hearts v Inverness 2:00am LIVE on setantasportsplus.com
Bundesliga Round 16 Bayern Munich v Hamburg 7:00am 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 16 Hoffenheim v Dortmund 8:50am 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 16 Wolfsburg v Stuttgart 10:40am 1st Airing
Scottish League 1 Round 16 Stenhousemuir v Rangers 12:30pm 1st Airing

MONDAY 16TH DECEMBER
Bundesliga Round 16 Schalke v Freibrug 4:00am 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 16 Leverkusen v Frankfurt 5:50am 1st Airing

SBS

SBS ONE
Friday November 29TH
7:00 pm A-League Live – Round 7: Mariners v Victory

Every Sunday
4:30 pm UEFA Champions League Magazine

Every Monday
4:30 pm FIFA Futbol Mundial
11:00 pm The World Game

Every Thursday
8:30 pm Thursday FC
11:00 pm UEFA Champions League Magazine

SBS TWO
Every Monday
8:40 pm A-League Highlights Show

Every Tuesday
5:00 pm A-League Highlights Show

FOX SPORTS

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE
All times AEDT
All games LIVE unless stated

WEEK 18
Sat Dec 7 Manchester United v Newcastle
11.35 pm Fox 1

Sun Dec 8 Liverpool v West Ham
1.50 am Fox 1

Sun Dec 8 Crystal Palace v Cardiff
1.50 am Viewers Choice

Sun Dec 8 Southampton v Manchester City
1.50 am Viewers Choice

Sun Dec 8 Stoke v Chelsea
1.50 am Viewers Choice

Sun Dec 8 West Brom v Norwich
1.50 am Viewers Choice

Sun Dec 8 Sunderland v Tottenham
4.20 am Fox 1

Mon Dec 9 Fulham v Aston Villa
12.20 am Fox 1

Tue Dec 9 Arsenal v Everton
2.50 am Fox 1

Wed Dec 10 Swansea v Hull
6.50 am Fox 1

HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE
ALL GAMES FOX 1

Fri Dec 6 Adelaide v Brisbane 7.30 pm
Fri Dec 6 Perth v Wellington 9.45 pm
Sat Dec 7 Wanderers v Heart 5.30 pm
Sat Dec 7 Mariners v Sydney 7.45 pm
Sun Dec 8 Victory v Newcastle 5.00 pm

FOX SPORTS FC
Every Tuesday 8.30 pm

SUNDAY SHOOT OUT
Every Sunday 7.00pm

SANTO, SAM & ED'S TOTAL FOOTBALL
Mondays at 7.30pm on FOX Sports 1

SPANISH LA LIGA
Sun Dec 15 Barcelona v Villareal
5.55 am Fox 2

Tue Dec 17 Valladolid v Celta Vigo
7.55 am Fox 1

TV Heaven

Matthew Naqvi

It's amazing what a week in football can do for a team. Melbourne Heart was coming off a week of horror, with only two points from eight games and immense pressure on John Aloisi to keep his job. They were set play Adelaide United in a game between two bottom three sides that should have been a miss. Instead fans witnessed an absolute beauty of a game with six goals scored including a pearler by Italian Andrea Migliorini from well outside the box. The draw may have saved Aloisi for another week, but Heart need to improve and win more games.

The A-League has some intriguing match ups this weekend with plenty of potential for movement on the ladder. The game of the round is between fourth placed Melbourne Victory and fifth placed Newcastle Jets.

Victory was fantastic in attack once again but they simply couldn't convert. They should have scored at least three goals with Kosta Barbarouses having the best chance when he waited too long to shoot and ending up stuffing it up. Victory will be determined to put on a show for their fans and put a few goals past the Jets. This game should be a goal fest with plenty of excitement. Victory should get up 3-2.

Central Coast Mariners will host Sydney FC on Saturday night. This game can go any way with Sydney in good form and scoring goals while the Mariners are a bit scratchy, especially after last week's struggle to keep Victory from scoring. Without Del Piero, Sydney may well struggle as he has been their focal point in moving forward in the final third. Phil Moss will have fired up the Mariners players during the week in training. I expect Sydney to continue to score but the Mariners defence should keep them in check. This one should end in a 1-all draw.

Make sure you check out SBS's Friday night game as well with Adelaide taking on Brisbane Roar. This one could be close and tough or Roar could take this to the limits and put away three or more goals. I predict Roar will come away with a 2-0 win.

In EPL action the highlight of the week will be the top 8 match up between Manchester United and Everton. The Red Devil's manager David Moyes will face his former club for the first time since taking over this year. Both sides are scoring well but lacking the killer instinct to win more games. There will be plenty of excitement behind this game and a win would be enormous for either side. Manchester United should pull their finger out and win this contest 2-1.

Once all the football action is done for another week, check out the football analysis programs. Santo, Sam and Ed's Total Football on Foxtel is a sure-fire hit for plenty of laughs. SBS delivers serious discussion better than most with The A-League Highlights Show and The World Game on Monday night. Thursday FC is your go to for light entertainment on Thursday night.

Enjoy plenty of football action this weekend and hopefully your team wins.

Catch Santo, Sam & Ed's Total Football on Mondays at 7.30pm on FOX Sports 1

Katsa's Korner

George Katsamboukas

Coaching is no laughing matter

A Cracker Jack Game was played out last weekend between the Westgate Bridge destined Teams Melbourne Heart and Adelaide United last weekend, where there were Goals a Plenty.

The Melbourne Heart looked down and out trailing 2-0, and then a remarkable comeback with two cracking goals by Hearts' Migliorini plus a converted penalty from Williams saw the Heart leading 3-2, only to concede and Adelaide Equaliser late in the game, with both Teams finishing all square at 3-3.

John Aloisi is still under the pump even after this result, and prior to this game, the Melbourne Heart Club Powerbrokers issued a statement backing Alosi, these are for Coach's under pressure, traditionally, a prelude to a don't come Monday.

Fingers crossed for Aloisi, as much as I kid about Coach's losing their Jobs, it is not a pleasant experience as it not only affects their livelihoods, but more importantly, places a huge dent into their confidence and wellbeing.

Harry Kewell once again failed to make the starting eleven with his Round 1 Head Injury that then became an Ankle Injury preventing him from Playing.

In the same Light, Sydney FC will be sweating the outcome of scans on Del Piero's Hamstring and would be hoping that it will not reveal anything sinister, that may keep him out for many weeks, as Del Piero's presence is vital to Sydney Fc's success.

Over to Victoria we go, where there is still much conjecture as to the composition of the Leagues for Season 2015.

The FFV has released, a few weeks back what they see as the structures for 2015.

Whether this goes ahead in the format announced will depend on the FFA's take on what is occurring in Victoria, and more importantly, what they would like to see occur, with the NPLV top of their priorities.

The FFV put out this week, expressions of interest for an under 20's League, which would bridge the gap between the current Under 18's league, and senior football.

Some punters would argue that if at 20, a Player cannot cut the mustard at Senior or Reserve level, and then there is no real future for that player.

I am of the belief that not everyone will be a Senior Player, and Players who lack ability, but have the passion to play, should be encouraged to do so, great move to form this League that will encourage younger players to stay with the game longer!

Northcote City's Milos Lujic is reported to be on the verge of signing a Contract with Sydney FC.

Great news for the lad, who has had a great Season with Championship Winners Northcote City, and he will no doubt do everything in his Power to make his next step up just as successful.

All eyes will be on Brazil this week as the World Cup Finals draw will be taking place, and we will know who our Opponents will be in the Stage One Rounds.

Until next week.

This is Katsa – Just as you have known him

Football has a new voice on the radio

Football has a new voice on the airwaves in the form of "Two up Front" a 1 hour weekly radio show covering everything from grassroots to the A-league as well as the major international leagues and competitions.

Two up Front is the brainchild of Producer/Presenters Joe Novella and Simon "Nige" Mansell, born out of desperation for football content on the radio.

"Nige and I were always complaining that there really isn't much radio, football-wise, that we wanted to listen to and the shows that are on are usually on too late at night," explains Novella. "So rather than complain about it all the time, we decided to get off our butts and do something about it."

Two up Front airs every Wednesday Night from 6 - 7pm and can be heard on Southern FM's 88.3FM frequency in Melbourne or listeners everywhere can tune in via the internet at www.southernfm.com.au

The show is developing a cult status an account of the often irreverent and comedic nature in which football topics are covered. "We didn't want to just relay the scores," says frontman, Nige. "We wanted to inject a bit of comedy and spice into our show and invite the listeners to get involved."

The show has been able to attract the likes of David Hoath, former CEO and Publisher of The Melbourne Age as well as high profile players like the former Melbourne Heart man Brendan Hammill. Not that the Two up Front gents keep to the high flyers: "We're happy to have anyone who is passionate about the game on the show from soccer mums to old timers still playing in the Vets leagues because everyone's story needs respect."

Joe Novella and Simon Mansell bring you football on the airwaves.

You can catch Two up Front every Wednesday night from 6-7pm or on the Facebook site at www.facebook.com/2upront.

Photos: PETER McALPINE

Phoenix Still Searching For First Win

Wellington Phoenix 0

Western Sydney 0

Match Details

Wellington Phoenix FC:
Glen MOSS, Manny MUSCAT, Ben SIGMUND, Andrew DURANTE, Vince LIA, Albert RIERA (Tyler BOYD 67'), Louis FENTON, Jason HICKS (Paul IFILL 58'), Kenny CUNNINGHAM, Carlos HERNANDEZ (Michael BOXALL 64'), Stein HUYSEGEMS

Unused subs: Lewis ITALIANO, Leo BERTOS

Western Sydney Wanderers FC:
Ante COVIC, Dean HEFFERNAN (Adam D'APUZZO 75'), Nikolai TOPOR-STANLEY, Michael BEAUCHAMP, Iacopo LA ROCCA (Jason TRIFIRO 77'), Mateo POLJAK, Labinot HALITI, Aaron MOOY, Tahj MINNIECON (Yousuff HERSI 66'), Mark BRIDGE, Shannon COLE

Unused subs: Jerad TYSON, Michael CINDRIC

By Joe Gallagher

Wellington Phoenix are still without a win this season after Sunday's disappointing goalless stalemate with Western Sydney Wanderers.

A draw against last season's premiers and a contender for the title this season might usually be credible, but Phoenix coach Ernie Merrick will have more than a tinge of frustration as pressure begins to mount around his club.

He was happy just to be back at his new home after spending much for the first two months of the season on the road, but was without last year's golden boot Jeremy Brockie (injury) and first-choice left back Reece Caira (rested) for the match against Tony Popovic's men.

Manny Muscat replaced Caira while Costa Rican Kenny Cunningham – who impressed in last week's heartbreaking loss to the Wanderers' derby opponents – deposed Brockie. Merrick also made room in his lineup for Paul Ifill and the rookie midfield duo of Jason Hicks and Albert Riera.

Popovic is still waiting for the return of Tomi Juric from injury and was also without marquee Shinji Ono and defender Jerome Polenz for the trip across the Tasman, and given this depletion to his squad would probably have been content with a draw.

He did, however, find room for the returning Youssuff Hersi on his bench.

The hosts started the brighter, with Wanderers goalkeeper Ante Covic down smartly to prevent Stein Huysegems in the opening few minutes, but if a crowd of just over 7,000 were thinking this was a sign of things to come they were sorely mistaken.

Carlos Hernandez, who has been Merrick's most prized attacking weapon this term but has yet to register a goal for his new club, was guilty of spurning a glorious opportunity when played in by Huysegems, completely miscuing his effort harmlessly wide of the post.

Wanderers keeper Ante Covic gets down low to foil Kenny Cunningham's attempt at goals.

It was as close as either side came in the opening spell, with much of the game being played in the midfield as referee Lucien Laverdure struggled to keep the match under control – issuing a total of eight yellow cards throughout the match, including one to Muscat in the final five minutes which sees him miss Friday's trip across the continent to face Perth Glory.

Wellington were the better side throughout but the match followed a frustratingly familiar narrative for Merrick's men. All too often there was no target in the centre for Huysegems and Cunningham to aim for, and when they did get into shooting positions they were wasteful.

Hernandez's next effort fired wide of Covic's left hand upright and the closest Wellington came was in the fourth minute of second half stoppage time as Ifill – who was acknowledged pre-match for notching a century of games for the Phoenix – turned a corner wide narrowly wide of the post.

Mark Bridge overhit a one-on-one chance with Glen Moss on the counter attack when played in by Hersi mid-way but this was the Wanderers' best – and only genuine – goalscoring opportunity of the game.

The two coaches will almost certainly have different views on their clubs' upcoming fixtures. While Wellington make the much-documented longest road trip in world football, Popovic will return back to Pirtek Stadim on Saturday to welcome a desperate Melbourne Heart as his side looks to gain ground on A-League leaders Brisbane Roar.

Desperation is something that will be seeping through the cracks of the Phoenix's dressing room now as they face a tough run of fixtures (Perth, Brisbane, Sydney FC) and the very real possibility of being winless after 10 games this term.

Though it's largely academic, it would be fair to say that the club's moves to take 'home' fixtures out of the capital so early in the season has backfired. Not only was the crowd figure well below what should be required of the side, towards the end of Sunday's match Merrick's troops appeared to be showing signs of fatigue after a few months in which players have travelled across Australasia – some even further for World Cup playoff fixtures.

But the travel schedule doesn't get any easier in the immediate future.

On that basis there is probably some merit to the fact that the Phoenix have been competitive in each of their games this season, though Merrick will be well aware that it is high time to arrest a winless slump that has seen restlessness reach breaking point in New Zealand.

25	Tackles	27
14	Total Shots	8
400	Total Passes	421
48.6%	Possession	54.4%
9	Corners	5
2	Offsides	1
10	Fouls committed	4

Man of the Match
Kenny Cunningham (WP)

Wanderers' Shannon Cole draws the foul on Wellington's Stein Huysegems.

Vince Lia (Phoenix) tries to play his way through the middle of the park.

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> Supporter Merchandise
> Team Wear (custom made/off the shelf)
> Lettering & Numbering

Photos: LIVE PIXEL

Migliorini Provides the Spark for Heart

Melbourne Heart

3

Adelaide United

3

Match Details

Melbourne Heart FC 3
(Andrea Migliorini 54', 65' David Williams 70' [Pen])
Adelaide United FC 3
(Steven Lustica 2', Sergio Cirio 15', Marcelo Carrusca 76')
AAMI Park, Melbourne HT: 0-2
Referee: Strebre Delovski
Attendance: 6,002

Melbourne Heart: 1. Andrew Redmayne (Gk), 3. Robbie Wielaert, 6. Patrick Gerhardt, 7. Iain Ramsay, 8. Massimo Murdocca, 11.Michael Mifsud 15. David Williams (22. Stefan Mauk 88'), 16. Aziz Behich, 23. Mate Dugandzic (14. Golgol Mebrahtu 46'),24. Patrick Kisnorbo, 25. Andrea Migliorini (22. Nick Kalmar 88')

Substitutes Not Used: 17. Jason Hoffman, 20. Tando Velaphi (Gk)
Yellow Cards: Patrick Kisnorbo 73', Aziz Behich 81'
Red Cards: Nil

Adelaide United: 1. Eugene Galekovic (Gk), 3. Nigel Boogaard, 5. Osama Malik, 7. Jeronimo Neumann (11. Bruce Djite 61'), 8. Isaias, 9. Sergio Cirio, 10. Marcelo Carrusca, 13. Steven Lustica (19. Jake Barker-Daish 75'), 18. Michael Zullo, 21. Tarek Elrich, 22. Fabio Ferreira (17. Awer Mabil 60')

Substitutes Not Used:19. Jake Barker-Daish, 23. Jordan Elsey, 30. John Hall (Gk)

Yellow Cards: Osama Malik 51', Jeronimo Neumann 57'
Red Cards: Nil

By Chris Hearn

Hope has been restored for Melbourne Heart as they roared back from 2-0 down to salvage a 3-3 draw which featured two glorious long-range strikes from Italian import Andrea Migliorini.

The 25-year-old treated the 6,002 in attendance to a clinic in long range shooting to give the loyal supporters real hope for the rest of the season.

Steven Lustica and Sergio Cirio gave the visitors a 2-0 lead inside 15 minutes. It looked certain that Heart would suffer their sixth straight loss. The atmosphere was tense but the home side's performance was not completely hopeless. As is becoming a recurring theme, Heart had more than enough chances to be level at the break which gave them hope and frustrated in equal measure.

Michael Mifsud was the main culprit, as he squandered a number of guilt-edged opportunities to the dismay of the home crowd.

Boos rang around AAMI Park as the half time whistle blew, with many thinking it could well be coach John Aloisi's last game in charge if things didn't drastically change in his favour.

The game was crying out for a hero. The introduction of Golgol Mebrahtu for Mate Dugandzic helped the home side to stretch the Adelaide defence after half time. A goal was coming, and in 54th minute Migliorini showed his quality with a world-class strike from 25 yards to get Heart back in the game.

The Italian rushed to celebrate with his manager showing a united front at the struggling Heart.

With the home support promptly finding their voice, Mebrahtu almost got his side back on level terms as he evaded Michael Zullo to force a brilliant save from Eugene Galekovic in the 56th minute.

As the game progressed, Heart continued to dominate the midfield area and were duly rewarded when Migliorini almost burst the net with his second goal of the evening.

Aziz Behich broke down the left and had the composure to roll a low cross perfectly into the path of the Italian, who unleashed another sublime and powerful strike into the top corner.

Heart were rampant and they would send the crowd into rapturous applause as they led in the 70th minute thanks to a penalty by David Williams.

Replays suggested that referee Strebre Delovski's decision to point to the spot was an incorrect one, as it revealed that Patrick Kisnorbo's header was played off Reds defender Tarek Elrich's chest.

Both sides came into this game desperate for maximum points and understandably so. Josep Gombau's men will feel aggrieved due to the one real contentious instance in the match that cost his side maximum points.

Barely seven minutes had passed as Marcelo Carrusca's free kick took a wicked deflection off Massimo Murdocca's forehead which fizzed past Andrew Redmayne in the Heart goal which silenced AAMI Park.

Both sides aggressive pressing game looked to stifle them late on, as neither looked likely to snatch all three points as they cancelled each other out in midfield.

While much of the pre-match talk was focused on Aloisi's coaching tenure, Gombau has also come under media scrutiny in the past fortnight which won't let up after they threw away a two-goal lead.

After the early promise of four points from his first two games in charge, his side have added just two draws and four losses since.

Man of the moment: Andrea Migliorini scores a ripper to provide Heart with the belief they have been yearning for all season.

Match Stats		
15	Tackles	15
13	Total Shots	18
234	Total Passes	557
30%	Possession	70%
3	Corners	10
7	Offsides	1
21	Fouls committed	14

Man of the Match
Andrea Migliorini (Heart)

Hugs of Heart: Massimo Murdocca and Andrea Migliorini embrace coach John Aloisi.

Heart Starter: Andrea Migliorini drags his team back into the contest and possibly the season.

Adelaide United v Brisbane Roar

Fri Dec 6 Hindmarsh Stdm 7:30 PM

Reds ready for Rampant Roar

Matt Mays

Table toppers Brisbane Roar visit a struggling Adelaide United side at Coopers Stadium on Friday night, which could see the Queenslander's extend their lead at the top of the A-League to 6 points.

United have clocked just one win all season - an opening day brace against Perth. SInce then they have struggles to find the net after having plenty of possession, while racking up the second worst defence in the league.

Roar however are literally flying high and everything seems to be working for them. Berisha has scored in successive games since March, Broich is creating more chances than he has had hot dinners (25 all season) and Roar have scored 15 goals in their 8 games.

A betting man would have to favour Brisbane for this won. The Roar have won all three of thier last visits to Adelaide. And in their last 8 away games in the A-League, they have alternated wins and losses - and if this run was to continue, they would win this match.

The stars are aligning for Brisbane.

But former Brissie favourite Michael Zullo will have something to say about that, despite still having strong feelings for his former club.

"I still love the club. They're my home town team and it's where I started my A-League career."

"But we are desperate for three points, so for those 90 minutes, I won't be showing any sentiment towards them."

To stand any chance in this one, the Reds need to shake up their defensive frailties. The Reds threw away a two goal lead at Melbourne Heart last week but coach Josep Gombau believes the fault should not be blamed on defensive coach Michael Valkanis.

"I think the problem is the team - not the defensive line."

"We are working in defence and this time it's Michael Valkanis who is doing this but for me it's not separately."

The last time the sides met, Roar won 2-1 in a play-off match which ended Adelaide's season.

Things just keep getting rosier for Brisbane as they welcome back former Manchester United midfielder Liam Miller from injury.

But despite the Manchester tag that comes with Miller, his team mate Luke Brattan believes it's the team that matters more than who wears the shirt.

"Manchester United has been my favourite club and I'm delighted he [Miller] is here, he has gelled straight away."

"With the players that we have had out there, and despite those injuries, we are still getting the results. That's a credit to the boys who have come in and done the job."

Twitter@mattahoo87

The Odds	Head-to-Head
AUFC 4.50 Draw 3.80 Roar 1.85	Played 26 Adelaide 9 Roar 9 Drawn 8

Referee: Peter O'Leary

Radio Broadcast: 891 ABC Adelaide, ABC Local Radio South Australia, 612 ABC Brisbane, ABC Local Radio Queensland, Grandstand Digital and Online/Mobile phone app.

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #ADLvBRI

Kiss of Death
Adelaide 1 – 3 Roar

Adelaide Utd Line Up

1.Eugene GALEKOVIC (GK) (c)
3.Nigel BOOGAARD
4.Jon McKAIN
5.Osama MALIK
7.JERONIMO
8.ISAIAS
9.Sergio CIRIO
10.Marcelo CARRUSCA
11.Bruce DJITE
13.Steven LUSTICA
17.Awer MABIL
18.Michael ZULLO
19.Jake BARKER-DAISH
21.Tarek ELRICH
22.Fabio FERREIRA
23.Jordan ELSEY
30.John HALL (GK)
one to be omitted

Ins: 4.Jon McKAIN (returns from illness)

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: 6.CASSIO (hamstring tendon – 6 weeks), 16.Daniel BOWLES (ankle – 1 week), 20.Paul IZZO (GK) (adductor – 1 week)

Roar Line Up

2. Matthew SMITH (c)
5. Ivan FRANJIC
7. Besart BERISHA
10. HENRIQUE
11. Liam MILLER
14. Diogo FERREIRA
15. James DONACHIE
17. Matt McKAY
18. Luke BRATTAN
19. Jack HINGERT
20. Matthew ACTON (gk)
22. Thomas BROICH
23. Dimitri PETRATOS
26.Corey BROWN
29.Kwame YEBOAH
30. Fraser CHALMERS (gk)

Ins: 11. Liam MILLER (returns from injury)

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: 1. Michael THEO (shoulder – one week), 3. Shane STEFANUTTO (hamstring – one week), 13. Jade NORTH (groin – one week), 25. George LAMBADARDIS (knee - season)

Perth Glory v Wellington Phoenix

Fri Dec 6 NIB stadium 9:45 PM

Injuries and suspensions hit the Long Distance Derby

Peter Simcox

Both Perth Glory and Wellington Phoenix go into Friday night's long distance Derby at nib Stadium with a number of key players missing due to injury and suspension. The Glory will have a make shift defence as they look to turn around a two game losing streak, while Wellington will be looking for their first win of the season without a number of their experienced players.

Glory Marquee man William Gallas is still struggling with a calf strain, while Steve Pantelidis has left the club to join Malaysian Super League side Selangor FC. Add to that the loss of Scott Jamieson and Josh Risdon means the only fit experienced defender they have is Michael Thwaite. To fill the void 19-year-old Brandon O'Neill is likely to come into the middle of defence, while Coach Alistair Edwards will have to rely on fellow youngsters Jack Clisby, Matthew Davies and Riley Woodcock to fill the rest of the backline.

Jacob Burns is suspended for the game while New Zealand international striker Shane Smeltz has been ruled out for four weeks with an ankle injury, meaning the side that takes the field on Friday will be the most inexperienced in the clubs history. "Last week was great to see some of our younger players making their debuts and I thought Brisbane knew they were in a game," Glory Coach Alistair Edwards said.

On Friday's game, Edwards is still hopeful Gallas will be a part of the action. "We will monitor William during the week and are hopeful he will be part of the squad," he said. "I don't know where those reports saying he would miss three games came from, but we are hopeful he will be OK."

Wellington, who will be looking to make it back-to-back wins in Perth, but will be without injured Costa Rican midfielder Carlos Hernandez, while defender Manny Muscat is suspended. There are also doubts over Spanish midfielder Albert Riera Vidal, who limped off last week, but striker Jeremy Brockie returns to the squad after recovering from a hamstring injury. Defender Reece Caira teenager Matthew Ridenton has been added to the squad.

The Phoenix won their last visit to nib Stadium, Paul Ifill and Belgian striker Stein Huysegems gave them a 2-0 lead, and despite Ryo Nagai's late goal they went on to win 2-1. Coach Ernie Merrick will be looking for a repeat on Friday, and he knows they need to take their chances. "I feel that we're playing good football and that we're improving in a range of areas. But to create chances inside the six-yard box like that and not put them away is disappointing for the whole team," said Merrick.

"I think they might be feeling desperate to score a goal. There's a lack of composure which isn't evident in training. They are very composed at training. "But playing as you train is the secret to high performance and training as you play, but the bottom line is you've got to score goals to win games and at the moment we're not doing that."

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Glory 1.95 Draw 3.50 Phoenix 4.85	Played 21 Glory 7 Phoenix 9 Drawn 5

Referee: Matthew Gillett

Radio Broadcast: 720 ABC Perth, ABC Local Radio WA, Grandstand Digital and Online/Mobile phone app.

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #PERvWEL

Kiss of Death
Glory 2-1 Phoenix

Glory Line Up

1.Daniel VUKOVIC (GK)
2.Jack CLISBY
3.Brandon O'NEILL
4.Ryan EDWARDS
6.Cameron EDWARDS
8.Ryo NAGAI
10.Jamie MACLAREN
11. Adrian ZAHRA
14.Steven McGARRY
16.Sidnei SCIOLA MORAES
17. Chris HAROLD
18.Jack DUNCAN
20. Danny DE SILVA
23.Michael THWAITE
24.Matthew DAVIES
25. Riley WOODCOCK

Ins: 11. Adrian ZAHRA, 20. Danny DE SILVA

Outs: 5.Steve PANTELIDIS, 9. Shane SMELTZ

Unavailable: Nil

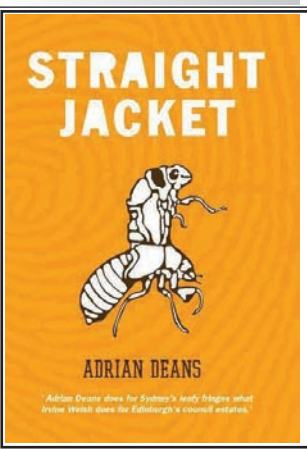
Phoenix Line Up

1. Glen Moss (GK)
3. Reece Caira
5. Michael Boxall
6. Josh Brindell-South
7. Leo Bertos
8. Paul Ifill
9. Kenny Cunningham
10. Stein Huysegems
11. Jeremy Brockie
13. Albert Riera
15. Jason Hicks
16. Louis Fenton
17. Vince Lia
18. Ben Sigmund
20. Lewis Italiano (GK)
22. Andrew Durante (capt)
23. Matthew Ridenton.
(one to be omitted).

Ins: 3. Reece Caira (promoted), 6. Josh Brindell-South (promoted), 23. Matthew Ridenton (promoted)

Outs: 2. Manny Muscat (suspended), 12 Tyler Boyd (omitted), 21. Carlos Hernandez (quad injury)

Unavailable: 2. Manny Muscat (suspended, one week). 21. Carlos Hernandez (quad injury 1-2 weeks)



A new novel by GW's Adrian Deans

Adrian Deans does for Sydney's leafy fringes what Irvine Welsh does for Edinburgh's council estates.
Straight Jacket is a ripsnorter of a ride through the dark heart of the burbs and may just be Australia's answer to American Psycho.
Kirsten Krauth, just_a_girl

Sometimes funny, sometimes disturbing, and always compelling. With a super original premise and a one-of-a-kind protagonist, Deans' entertaining follow up to Mr Cleansheets delivers on every level.
Tony Wilson, Making News

A disturbingly good read. Unnerving and darkly comic.
Stuart Quin, Ealing Studios Australia

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West Sydney Wanderers v Melb Heart

Sat Dec 7 Parramatta Stdm 5:30 PM

In-form Rivals go Full Circle

Samal Zaiei

Melbourne Heart are still searching for the first win of the season, alongside Wellington Phoenix, who despite putting on solid performances in their last game against Adelaide and the Wanderers in round six, have not been able to see all 3 points in eight games. Aloisi's side though does not look like it is weakening in the slightest and on the contrary is showing signs of improvement in midfield and up front with the likes of Andrea Migliorini. This Saturday's game at Parramatta stadium will not be a disappointing one and will surely attract a huge home support fan as they back their side to make amends to last week's performance.

With some talk taking place in the media regarding the uncertainty of Aloisi's future as head coach in the Heart, many agree that it is not poor performance and ambition from the team, but the other teams in the League have only gotten stronger. Many have stated that it would not only be unfair but also unreasonable to let him go as a coach since there are still opportunities available with 19 rounds still remaining. In support of friend Popvic talked recently about Aloisi as a coach ""He's a winner, he's been a proven winner throughout his career as a footballer and you can see those traits in him and on the weekend you could see his passion and drive. That'll put him in good stead." He stated however, ""I'm sure he'll work extremely hard to get things right at that club and I hope he does - but not this weekend."

Coming into their fifth battle together, Melbourne Heart have still not beaten Western Sydney and stuanch goalkeeper Ante Covic, although should feel somewhat threatened by last week's stunning long range efforts from Migliorini, says he is ready for whatever he will throw at him on Saturday. "He's timed two shots to perfection, the first one was an absolute bomb" said Covic "you can look at those things and say he's going to make it difficult but at the same time they only happen every once in a while. So I'm not too worried about that. I know who can hit the ball. I'll be ready for pretty much everything, whether it's from halfway, outside the box, inside the six yard. I don't care what comes at me I've just got to be switched on."

The head coach is still positive after last rounds surprise scoreless draw and was happy to atleast have taken a point away from the game, "we played a team today that are desperate for their first win in front of their home fans. It's a tough place to come." Yes both teams can be happy to have taken a point away, but serious consideration will need to be given to those missed chances, particularly Mark Bridge's opportunity in the 77th minute, being considered as 'one of the misses of the season.'

So what strategies, tactics and methods will Aloisi employ in his efforts to see his first win of the season against his former Socceroos team mate Wanderers? How will their defence perform to ensure Santalab, Cole, Hersi (presuming he is fit enough to play) and others in attack for Western Sydney do not put them on show? How will the attacking mindset of the forwards be affected knowing that they are facing the team with the strongest defence last and this season? Will this be Aloisi's confidence booster for his team or will it be another trip back to the drawing board to consider where exactly change is required?

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Wanderers 1.40 Draw 4.75 Heart 9.55	Played 4 Wanderers 4 Heart 0 Drawn 0

Referee: Kris Griffiths-Jones

Radio Broadcast: Full Coverage -Online/ Mobile phone app, Second half Coverage 702 ABC Sydney, ABC Local Radio NSW, 666 ABC Canberra, 774 ABC Melbourne, ABC Local Radio Victoria Grandstand Digital and Online/ Mobile phone app.

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #WSWvMHT

Kiss of Death
Wanderers 2-0 Heart

Wanderers Line Up

1.Ante COVIC (gk)
2.Shannon COLE
3.Adam D'APUZZO
4.Nikolai TOPOR-STANLEY
5.Michael BEAUCHAMP (c)
6.Jerome POLENZ
7.Labinot HALITI
8.Mateo POLJAK
10.Aaron MOOY
12.Tahj MINNIECON
13.Matthew SPIRANOVIC
17.Youssouf HERSI
18.Iacopo LA ROCCA
19.Mark BRIDGE
20.Jerrad TYSON (gk)
21.Shinji ONO
22. Dean Heffernan
23.Jason TRIFIRO
Two to be omitted

Ins: 17.Youssouf HERSI (returns from injury), 6.Jerome POLENZ (promoted), 21.Shinji ONO (promoted)

Outs: 25.Mark CINDRIC

Unavailable: 9. Tomi Juric (knee), 11.Brendon SANTALAB

Heart Line Up

1. Andrew REDMAYNE (GK)
3. Robbie WIELAERT
6. Patrick GERHARDT
7. Iain RAMSAY
8. Massimo MURDOCCA
10. Harry KEWELL
11.Michael MIFSUD
14. Golgol MEBRAHTU
15. David WILLIAMS
16. Aziz BEHICH
17. Jason HOFFMAN
19. Ben GARUCCIO
20. Tando VELAPHI (GK)
21. Stefan MAUK
22. Nick KALMAR
23. Mate DUGANDZIC
24. Patrick KISNORBO
25. Andrea MIGLIORINI
Two to be omitted

Ins: 10. Harry KEWELL (returns from injury), 19. Ben GARUCCIO (promoted)

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: 4. Orlando ENGELAAR (Fractured tibia – long-term), 9. Dylan MACALLISTER (Hamstring – ~2-3 weeks), 13. Jonatan GERMANO (Calf - 2 weeks)

Central Coast Mariners v Sydney FC

Sat Dec 7 Bluetongue Stdm 7:30 PM

Mariners to Become Nomads?

Adrian Deans

In normal circumstances, Mariners fans would look forward to the visit of Sydney FC blithely confident in the collection of another three points.

The Mariners have a very strong record at home against the Sky Blues, especially in the last four seasons, but two factors will have the home fans worried. The Mariners have not started life under Phil Moss brilliantly – despite the accumulation of four points from a possible six; and Sydney have won four in a row. Never before has Sydney brought such form into this derby.

In fact, until the Newcastle game I didn't think they'd been all that convincing, but four in a row does not happen by accident. Against Newcastle last weekend Sydney were excellent in the second half – evolving from good luck and resilience into a style that looked suspiciously like decent football. They've finally found their confidence and are looking the goods. Nicky Carle and Richard Garcia have been impressive, Chianese is contributing regular goals and at the back Eli Abbas and Nikola Petkovic have been a revelation.

In contrast, the Mariners have been strangely off their usual pace since Mossy took over from Graham Arnold. I sincerely doubt that has anything to do with Mossy, but the players must feel a bit flat when the biggest personality in the club departs so suddenly. The absence of Nick Montgomery for most of the last two weeks might have had something to do with it also. Alongside John Hutchinson, his screening role is so critical to the way the Mariners set up, especially in defence, and when the Mariners don't have their systems properly tuned the only Plan B they seem to have is gutsy, backs to the wall resilience. That resilience encourages me to believe they won't be beaten this week, but can they force a win against the rampant Sydney?

I think the Mariners need to get McBreen on from the start, playing close to Flores and encouraging runs forward from Duke, Rose and Roux. Josh Rose may be up against his former team mate if Pedj Bojic returns from suspension, and Pedj's return against his old club will be hotly anticipated by the Yellow Army.

All reason tells me the Mariners are ripe for the plucking by a Sydney team playing its most confident football in years, but man for man (assuming Del Piero is still injured), I believe the Mariners are the better team and just might rediscover their form in a match regarded as unlosable by the home fans.

Adrian Deans is the author of Mr Cleansheets and more recently Straight Jacket – published by High Horse Books and available in all good book stores. www.adriandeans.com

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Mariners 1.75 Draw 3.80 Sydney FC 5.50	Played 25 Mariners 8 Sydney FC 10 Drawn 7

Referee: Peter Green

Radio Broadcast: 92.5 ABC Central Coast, 702 ABC Sydney, ABC Local Radio NSW, Grandstand Digital, Online/Mobile phone app

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #CCMvSYD

Kiss of Death
Mariners 2-1 Sydney FC

Mariners Line Up

1. Justin PASFIELD (GK)
2. Daniel MCBREEN
3. Joshua ROSE
4. Marcel SEIP
5. Zachary ANDERSON
6. Brent GRIFFITHS
7. John HUTCHINSON (C)
8. Nick MONTGOMERY
9. Mitchell DUKE
10. Marcos FLORES
11. Nick FITZGERALD
12. Liam REDDY
14. Michael MCGLINCHEY
15. Storm ROUX
16. Trent SAINSBURY
17. Anthony CACERES
19. Matt SIMON
21. Mile STERJOVSKI
two to be omitted

Ins: 5. Zachary ANDERSON (promoted), 11. Nick FITZGERALD (promoted)

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: 22. Tom SLATER (back – 2 weeks)

Sydney FC Line Up

1.Ivan NECEVSKI (go)
2.Seb RYALL
4.Ranko DESPOTOVIC
5.Matt JURMAN
6.Nikola PETKOVIC
8. Pedj BOJIC
11.Richard GARCIA
14.Mitch MALLIA
15.Terry MCFLYNN
16.Joel CHIANESE
19.Nicky CARLE
20.Vedran JANJETOVIC (go)
21.Yairo YAU
22.Ali ABBAS
27.Christopher NAUMOFF
28.Matt THOMPSON
29.Alec UROSEVSKI
34. Aaron CALVER
Two to be omitted

Ins: 8. Pedj BOJIC (return from suspension), 14. Mitch MALLIA (promoted), 29. Alec UROSEVSKI (promoted)

Outs: 10.Alessandro DEL PIERO (c) (1 week – hamstring)

Unavailable: Rhyan GRANT (knee – season), Peter TRIANTIS (groin - indefinite), Terry ANTONIS (thigh - indefinite), Tiago Calvano (Suspended – 7 matches), Brett EMERTON (1 week – calf)

Melbourne Victory v Newcastle Jets

Sun Dec 8 AAMI Park 5:00 PM

Victory Line Up

1.Nathan COE (gk)
2.Pablo CONTRERAS
3.Adama TRAORE
4.Nick ANSELL
5.Mark MILLIGAN
7.Gui FINKLER
9.Kosta BARBAROUSES
10.Archie THOMPSON
11.Connor PAIN
13.Andrew NABBOUT
14.James TROISI
15.Mitch NICHOLS
16.Rashid MAHAZI
17.Jimmy JEGGO
20.Lawrence THOMAS (gk)
24.Scott GALLOWAY
25.Jason GERIA
One to be omitted

Ins: 17. Jimmy JEGGO, 13. Andrew NABBOUT, 25. Jason GERIA (all promoted)

Outs: 6. Leigh BROXHAM (suspended – 1 week), 23. Adrian LEIJER (suspended – 1 week)

Unavailable: nil

Victory ready for Jets' Barrage

Andrew Bishara

It has been a big week for the Melbourne Victory. First up, the club confirmed that NSL player and coach Jean-Paul De Marigny will be Kevin Muscat's new assistant coach. Secondly, it has announced that it would take part in next season's Asian Champions League.

Now, the week will round off when it faces the Newcastle Jets on Sunday afternoon at AAMI Park, the 1000th A-League game since its inception nine years ago. It will also be the first time it will play its "home" this season.

It starts a five home game stretch at AAMI Park for the Victory, with clashes against the Jets, Perth Glory, Melbourne Heart, Western Sydney and Brisbane Roar to come over the following month.

But while the Victory one of the best home records over the last three seasons, where it lost just seven games out of 44, Muscat has said he has not planned that far ahead.

"You can fall into the trap of trying to set some goals ... we're looking for maximum points and then take it from there," he said.

"Teams come across here and certainly know what to expect and we aim not to disappoint."

The Victory will be looking to get back on the winners' list after its 0-0 draw against the Central Coast Mariners; a game it dominated, but couldn't find the goal it deserved. It will come against a Jets side, in a very good run of form, despite its 2-0 loss to Sydney FC last week.

Prior to that defeat, the Jets had gone six games without losing, winning three and drawing the other three. Its form over the past month has been superb, with coach Gary Van Egmond, getting the team to work hard on the pitch to grab its victories.

Van Egmond now has to decide on whether to bring back marquee-signing Emile Heskey into the starting eleven. Last week, the Englishman came off the bench to partner Adam Taggart when the Jets were trailing.

The Newcastle boss said that the striker force is a work in progress.

"There was moments there that the combination looked good and obviously it's definitely a work in progress, that type of combination as well."

As for Muscat, he has a full squad to choose from, but has stressed that Brazilian playmaker, Gui Finkler, will feature for the team, despite a lack of playing time this season.

"The fact he's got himself back in - and he's worked tremendously hard to get to that point - shows his determination," Muscat said.

"He's been biding his time, to be honest, and Mitch and James have been performing admirably. It's just a matter of him hanging in there a bit more."

The likelihood is that Finkler will come off the bench this week, if the Victory needs a creative spark. But the Jets are in good form at the moment, and will not give up this easily. Therefore expect both sides should cancel each other out in what should be a thrilling game.

The Odds	Head-to-Head
Victory 1.75	Played 24
Draw 3.65	Victory 9
Jets 5.00	Jets 11
	Drawn 4

Referee: Alan Milliner

Radio Broadcast: Full Coverage Online/Mobile phone app, Coverage from 6:30pm AEDT 774 ABC Melbourne, ABC Local radio Victoria, 1233 ABC Newcastle, Grandstand Digital.

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #MVCvNEW

Kiss of Death
Victory 1-1 Jets

Jets Line Up

1. Mark BIRIGHITTI (gK)
2. Scott NEVILLE
3. Taylor REGAN
4. Kew JALIENS
5. Ben KANTAROVSKI
6. Zenon CARAVELLA
7. Andrew HOOLE
8. Ruben ZADKOVICH (c)
9. Emile HESKEY
10. Nathan BURNS
11. Craig GOODWIN
15. Josh BRILLANTE
16. Jacob PEPPER
18. James BROWN
19. Michael BRIDGES
20. Ben KENNEDY (gK)
21. Sam GALLAWAY
22. Adam TAGGART
Two to be omitted.

Ins: Kew Jaliens (returns from suspension), Michael Bridges (promoted), Sam Gallaway (returns from injury)

Outs: Josh Mitchell

Unavailable: Connor CHAPMAN (ankle)

Belmore United FC will host its Annual General Meeting on Sunday 15 December 2013, 4pm

The Official Executive Committee would like to inform and invite all members of Belmore United FC's (also known as Belmore Hercules Soccer Club) to attend the Official Annual General Meeting. Details for meeting below:

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (OFFICIAL)

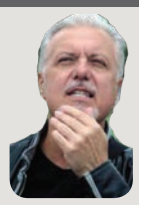
BELMORE UNITED FC (also known as Belmore Hercules Soccer Club)
Date: Sunday 15 December 2013
Time: 4pm
Location: Level 1 Auditorium, Greek Orthodox Community of NSW, 206 Lakemba St, Lakemba

Round 9: ASK THE EXPERTS

THE VERDICT Adelaide - 3 Roar - 8 - Draw - 4 Glory - 10 Phoenix - 2 Draw - 3 Wanderers - 14 Heart - 0 Draw - 1 Mariners - 6 Sydney FC - 2 Draw - 7 Victory - 15 Jets - 0 Draw - 0

Santo Cilauro 22
Draw
Glory
WSW
Draw
Victory
Last week: 3

Working Dog Productions

George Donikian 18
Draw
Perth
Draw
Draw
Victory
Last week: 2

Media Mogul

George Calombaris 19
Brisbane Roar
Perth Glory
Wanderers
Mariners
Victory
Last week: 1

No.1 Victory ticket holder

Eddie Krncevic 14
Draw
Draw
Wanderers
Draw
Victory
Last week:1

Former Socceroo

John Perin 17
Draw
Phoenix
Wanderers
Mariners
Victory
Last week: 2

Hall of Fame Socceroo

Andy Harper 16
Brisbane
Perth
Wanderers
Sydney FC
Victory
Last week: 1

NSL Champ / Fox Sports

Ross Alatsas 21
Adelaide
Perth
Wanderers
Mariners
Victory
Last week: 2

GM Greek Media Group

Jimmy Campbell 18
Brisbane
Phoenix
Wanderers
Mariners
Victory
Last week: 2

Former Socceroo

George Campbell 21
Roar
Draw
Wanderers
Draw
Victory
Last week: 4

Sth Melb & NSL Legend

Jimmy Rooney 13
Adelaide
Perth
Wanderers
Mariners
Victory
Last week: 2

World Cup '74 Socceroo

Roger Sleeman 19
Roar
Draw
Wanderers
Draw
Victory
Last week: 1

Reigning Tipping Champ

John Doyle 16
Adelaide
Perth
Wanderers
Mariners
Victory
Last week: 1

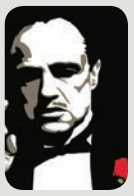
Original Captain Socceroo

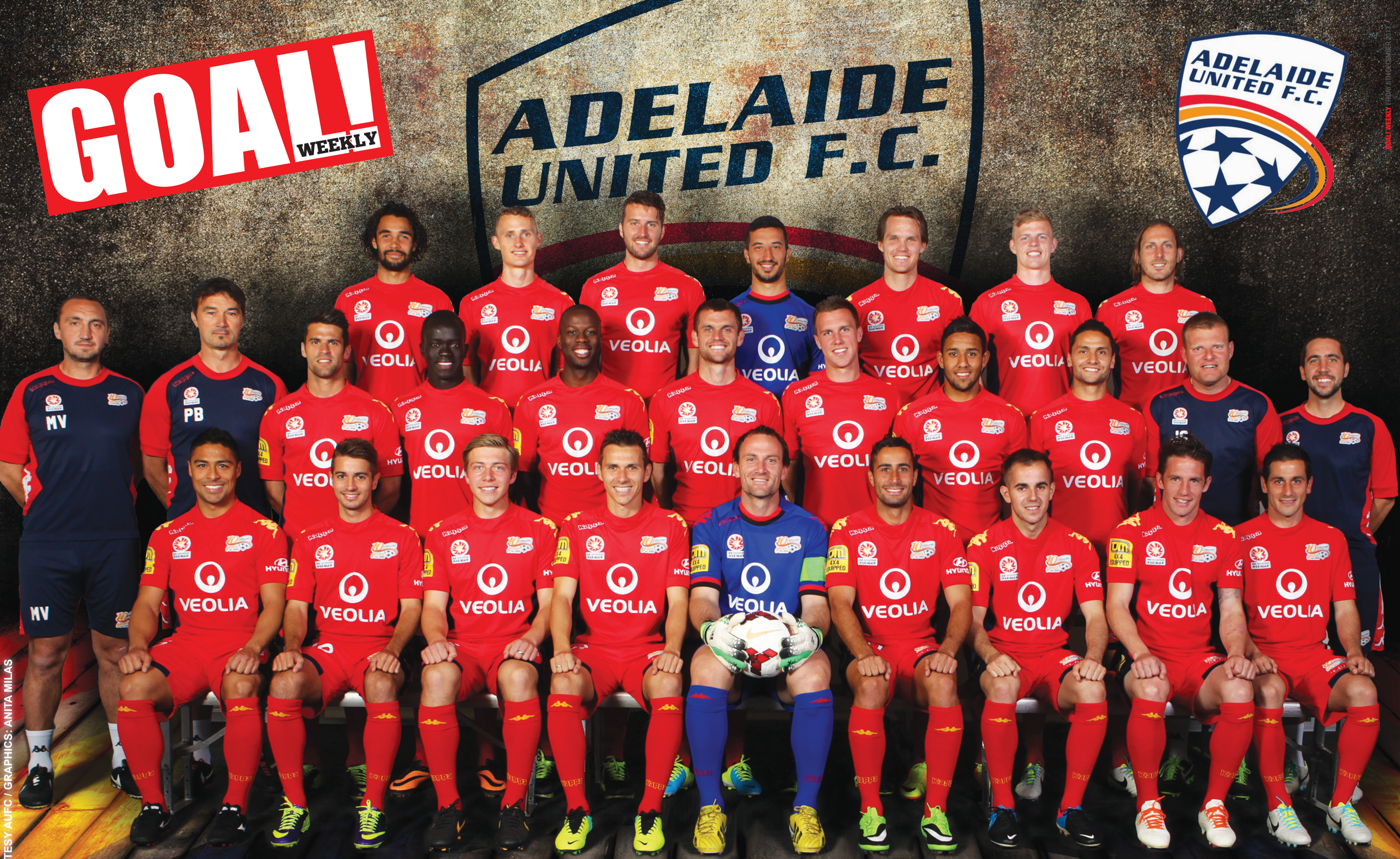
Peter Katholos 21
Brisbane
Perth
Wanderers
Sydney FC
Victory
Last week: 4

Former Socceroo

Steve Blair 18
Brisbane
Glory
Wanderers
Draw
Victory
Last week: 2

Former Socceroo

Kiss Of Death 20
Roar
Glory
Wanderers
Draw
Victory
Last week: 4

GW Contributors



Back row: Osama Malik, Daniel Bowles, Antony Golec, Paul Izzo, Nigel Boogaard, Jordan Elsey, Jon McKain
Middle row: Michael Valkanis (Assistant Coach), Peter Blazincic (GK Coach), Fabio Ferreira, Awer Mabil, Bruce Djite, Cameron Watson, Brent McGrath, Jake Barker-Daish, Marcelo Carrusca, Josep Gombau (Head Coach), Pau Marti (Assistant Coach)
Front row: Cassio, Michael Zullo, Jacob Melling, Isaias, Eugene Galekovic, Tarek Elrich, Steven Lustica, Jeronimo, Sergio Cirio

PHOTOS COURTESY AUFC / GRAPHICS: ANITA MILAS

TWEETS OF THE WEEK

Compiled by Roy Skillen

In the A-League all eyes were on a possible battle Royale between two of the leagues strugglers, Melbourne Heart and Adelaide Utd. It was a game where defeat would surely see the end of either, John Aloisi and his watered down version of Dutch total football, or Josep Gambau and his Spanish erm…. Tiki Taka. The early favorite for the chop was Socceroo legend Aloisi who has really struggled since taking the Heart hot seat just over a year ago. Of course, his season hasn't been helped by a pre season injury to his marquee signing and auspicious absence of club captain Harry Kewell. But maybe this TV show will explain a few things.

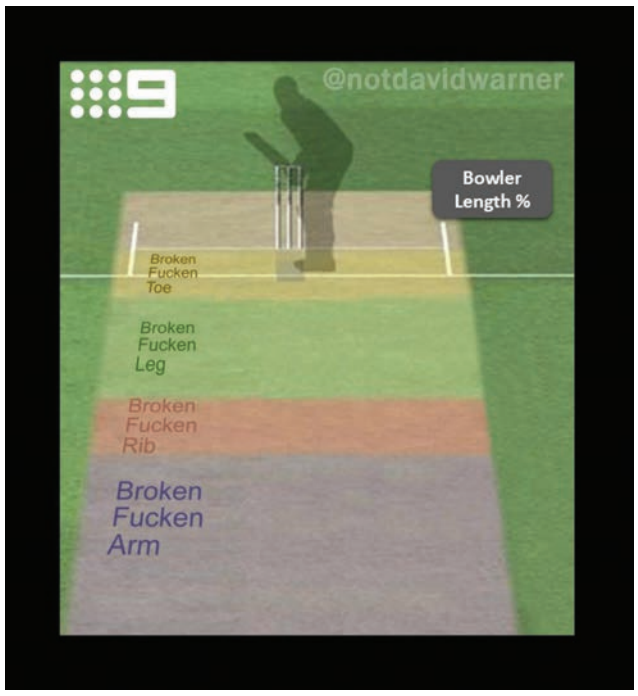
Alex Kocovski @alekoisawesome
30 Nov
Next on the #ComedyChannel it's #HarryKewell the #MelbourneHeartStory followed by #JohnAloisiGreatestCoachingTriumphs #HeartBelieve

The odds were also stacked against Aloisi and Heart when a copy of Josep Gambau's footballing qualifications were leaked to the press.

Happy 'lil Vegemite @adamOsaussies
1 Dec
You can't beat the credentials of Gumby #ADLvMHT @thebleague #gombauWOW pic.twitter.com/ujYW2pSWFA

The match looked like going the way of the twitter trolls and people were already lining up super John 's replacement when his side slumped to a 2-0 half time deficit.

Lachlan Phillips @lachie87
1 Dec
EXCLUSIVE: Favourite to replace Aloisi named #MHTvADL #foxfootball pic.twitter.com/vIMKCx236X



Amazingly the game finished 3-3 and both bosses kept their jobs much to the annoyance of many hard core supports from both sides. What fans want to see is fight. They want to see their players dying for the shirt. So maybe, and I hate to say this trust me, its time for certain clubs to take a leaf out of the cricketing book of passion and sledging.

Not David Warner @notdavidwarner
2 Dec
Channel 9 have modified their 'Hawk-Eye' pitch map graphic in preparation for the Adelaide Test. #Ashes pic.twitter.com/fBnzDYJpXk

Oh yeah and I thought these picture were quite funny to.

Football Funnys @FootballFunnys
3 Dec
That awkward moment when the goalkeeper mistakes the football for his defenders head... pic.twitter.com/oUwtNF8R3e

The Poke @ThePoke
3 Dec
Perfectly timed football photo of the day [via imgur] pic.twitter.com/Jh8SmIKZrL

Seeking Soccer Sleuths

The Victoria Police Soccer Club is seeking the assistance of anyone interested in helping tracing the roots of the club.

The club celebrates its 63th anniversary next year, when a large function will be held, and is looking to capture its history once and for all. The role would involve assisting in collating photographs, articles and other artefacts which relate to the VPSC.

For further details please contact Vince Manno on 0403 130 273 or email: vincent.manno@police.vic.gov.au

Boo's World

Mark Boric

Heart hosted Adelaide United in a game which proved neither team is good enough to win a game at the moment, with the points shared in a 3-3 draw. Looking gone at 0-2 down, the knives were out for Heart coach John Aloisi and until a stunning three goal burst it appeared he may have been leading his side for the final time. Two stunning strikes from Andrea Migliorini and a charity penalty from Strebre Delovski gave Heart the lead.

It proved to be a lead they were not good enough to keep, as Adelaide got back on level terms. Josep Gombau's Tiki Taka Revolution picked up a point to silence his critics, who had earlier scoffed at his claims that he was about to sign a two year contract extension.

It was a game in which the Heart "active support" conducted a silent protest. They weren't completely silent, they could be heard groaning as loudly as anyone each time Michael Mifsud fluffed yet another one-on-one with the goalkeeper. Andy Harper labelled him Michael Misfire, but MissDud could also cover his efforts so far. Harry Kewell is still probably a couple of weeks away from playing. In fact, if he ever becomes a Fox Sports pundit the caption underneath his name should be just that, Harry Kewell - A couple of weeks away, to go along with Mark Bosnich - Former Manchester United goalkeeper and Robbie Slater - EPL winner with Blackburn.

It was poor finishing which cost Melbourne Victory a win on the Central Coast, spurning plenty of chances to take all three points. The Roar were too good for Perth Glory and the Sydney FC revival continued with a defeat of Newcastle Jets, for whom Adam Taggart was not allowed the space to shoot at will he was afforded against Melbourne Heart. Wellington Phoenix were good value for a point at home to the mighty Western Sydney Wanderers.

This weekend will see the World Cup draw, and we will need the balls to come out of the pots very favourably to give us some sort of Group of Life. Switzerland from Pot 1 would be nice. Avoiding France in Pot 3 would be another bonus. Half of Pot 4 would be very ugly, the other half merely bad news.

The FFV continue to make people shake their heads, calling for expressions of interest from clubs to field teams in a Boy's Under 20 league next year. The reserves competitions of the VPL and State League Division One have long been Under 21's leagues, and most of the reserves teams below them cater towards younger players. With twelve divisions below that (each with seniors and reserves competitions) as well as the Thirds Leagues, there are ample opprtunities for players progressing from the Under 18's to find a place in senior football. Are we heading for a nanny state where no one can play against anyone a year or two older than them?

I suppose they need something new to do at St Kilda Road, having failed in implementing the NPLV for next season.

Steve Pantelidis has left Perth Glory to join Selangor in Malaysia. With William Gallas under an injury cloud maybe Perth could look at bringing Ljubo Milicevic back? Otherwise it could take a while before Alistair Edwards can breed another son.

Time to check the birth certificate of the kid in last week's Goals For Grassroots segment from Preston Lions who was two feet taller than everyone else in his team. We could have another Sonny Sevin on our hands.

Looking ahead, there are two A-League games on Friday night. Adelaide "In a few years we will be fully Tiki Taka" United v Brisbane "We can Tiki Taka too" Roar. There is also the dour Distance Derby between Perth Glory and Wellington Phoenix to put everyone to sleep. The Wanderers host Heart, which could be anything really. Central Coast are in a transitional phase and come up against a streaky Sydney FC going for five wins in a row. The Sunday game is Victory hosting Jets, which should see Musky's boys return to the winner's list unless Pablo Contreras gets sent-off, which remains a strong possibility each week.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

A-League Title 2013/14

Brisbane Roar	3.75
Wanderers	4.25
Melbourne Victory	5.50
Central Coast Mariners	6.50
Sydney FC	6.50
Newcastle Jets	10.0
Perth Glory	17.0
Adelaide United	23.0
Wellington Phoenix	34.0
Melbourne Heart	51.0

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Photos: LIVE PIXEL, PETER McALPINE

Disability football showcased at A-League Clash

By Alex Dandanis

On Sunday 1st December, the dreams of eight young football players came true. They were given a chance to play the world game on a world class stage, AAMI Stadium.

The group of nine to 18 year olds live and breathe football, but are not your typical group. The team consists of players born with cerebral palsy or with an acquired brain injury.

They are participants in Disability Sport & Recreation's 7-a-side Football Program, supported by Melbourne Heart FC and Northcote City FC.

7-a-side football is coordinated under the same rules as the International Federation of Associated Football (FIFA), with slight modifications. The offside rule does not apply in the game. The field is a reduced size with smaller goal posts and each match consists of two 30-minute halves.

7-a-side football gives its players the opportunity to be involved in a sport they love in a fun, competitive, and supportive environment.

Former Northcote City senior player and coach of the Disability Sport & Recreation 7-a-side Football Program, George Tsangas said, "they absolutely love it, they feel like professional footballers, true athletes."

On Sunday night, the team took to AAMI Stadium for a half-time exhibition game, highlighting the abilities of Victorians with disability and a shared love of the game, in preparation for International Day of People with Disability on Tuesday 3rd December.

AAMI Park was abuzz with participants of the DSR's 7-a-side match. Photos: LIVE PIXEL

Players could not contain their excitement, grinning from ear to ear as their parents watched on proudly.

Without Melbourne Heart FC, the team would not have received this opportunity.

"Melbourne Heart FC are proud to be involved with Disability Sport and Recreation and this event encapsulates our ongoing commitment and dedication to providing opportunities for all Victorians to share in the football experience," explained Melbourne Heart FC Manager of Community, Sue Crow.

Disability Sport & Recreation CEO, Rob Anderson said, "It is wonderful to see an A-League Team with such community spirit, highlighting the importance of sport for all."

"Currently only one in four Victorians with disability participate in active sport and recreation, compared to almost three in four of their able-bodied peers. Everyone should be given the opporutnity to receive the positive health benefits that sport promotes."

Disability Sport & Recreation, a Victorian not-for-profit organisation, have been coordinating the only 7-a-side football team in the state at grassroots level since 2010. There is currently no league for 7-a-side football in Victoria, due to a lack of players. Each year a Victorian representative squad competes in the National Paralympic 7-a-side Football Championships.

There is large scope to expand the sport, with a number of Victorians eligible to take part in 7-a-side football. The sport is designed for those with cerebral palsy, acquired brain injury or those who have experienced stroke. There are currently over 5000 Victorians with cerebral palsy alone.

The great challenge is to find players for the game.

"We know there are football fans out there eligible to take part, but they don't even know about the program. If we can get a small league happening in the future, that would be the perfect scenario," said George.

"We urge football clubs to promote football for people with disability, get the message out there that 7-a-side football is an option. Football fans may know someone with disability who could benefit from our program, or might even be the next star Paralympic footballer."

For further information on how to get involved, with your club or individually, contact Disability Sport & Recreation on (03) 9473 0133.

Football Manager 2014 Review

By Brandon Galgano

With so much focus on the major football game related titles such as FIFA and Pro Evolution Soccer, it seems that one very popular title continues to slowly but surely gain a cult following every year.

Football Manager has only grown in stature over the past eight years with the introduction of a brand new match engine especially since 2009 as well as an ever growing data base of football knowledge which is unmatched by any of its competitors.

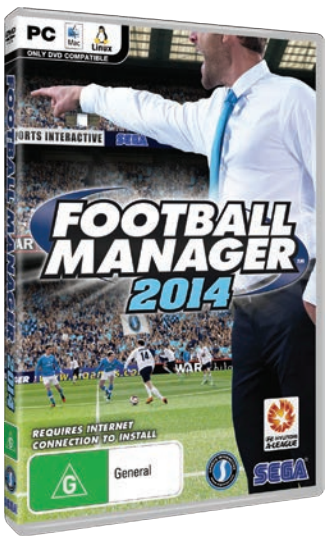
I have personally played the series since the 2008 version and have noticed first hand, over many hours of intense pleasure, the huge changes which SEGA have made to the most popular simulation based football game on the planet, over the past five years especially.

In Match Game Play:

This has always been a fascinating part of the game for me. I started on the FM08 platform of the game which was the final version not to include an actual graphic representation of the players playing but rather had the players as Dots running around on a 2D field.

The game has come a long way from those days with the new graphics looking better than ever. When a goal is scored it is always great to see the home fans react with the away fans sitting in silence. I have always felt however, that the match day scenario itself is still a little behind other aspects of the simulation.

Since the major graphic update of the game I have always felt that SEGA have put more effort into



updating graphic features, such as stadiums and off the field features, rather than actually attempting to revamp the match-day scenario itself.

To be honest, I must admit that on quite a few occasions over the past few versions of the game, I have actually switched back to the FM08 version, as I believe to some extent that the 2D simulation of the game played then is quicker and in some aspects more realistic than what is on show even today.

For sure, off the field the newer version is in every aspect a better game, and it should be, but I even turned on my old FM 11 version and compared it to this year's game play and to be honest, I thought the 11 game play was closer to the real thing. This is not in terms of graphics or stadia or any other features other than the actual physical game-play itself.

The passing seems a touch slower, whilst the dribbling and tackling give the impression that they have gone backwards as well. How this happens I don't know, even though the visual upgrades have been substantially improved over the past few editions of the game, but in my opinion the match-play doesn't quite feel like it has.

I do feel though that the off-field features of the game are absolutely terrific as usual, with revamped press conferences and player contract negotiations once again impressing.

A more sophisticated board interaction system also sets the game apart from its predecessor with more realistic interactions between the manager and their chairman.

Here is a list of some of the major game enhancements

- An improved 3D Match Engine
- A tactical overhaul
- More realistic transfers and contracts
- More sophisticated board interaction
- More complex interaction between staff, players and rival managers
- A revamped news system
- An enhanced user interface
- Evolution for Classic mode
- Additional community features
- Extensive tech improvements
- Official Real Time Editor will be available as a paid download - 19 August

All in all, Football Manager 14 is truly impressive football simulation and despite its perceived shortcomings it is still the most realistic game of its kind on the market.

Rating: 8/10

Definitely worth the price and is still the best managerial simulation game available.

Q&A With FM14's Miles Jacobson

GW gets the inside word from FM14's Miles Jacobson, Studio Director at Sports Interactive, developers of the Football Manager franchise

What do you think makes FM14 so popular with football fans?

Every football fan will debate the clubs transfers, the tactics and what is going on at their club – it's like they want to be the manager, and think they know better. We allow people to find out if they really do, or not – and increase their knowledge along the way.

For some people it has become an obsession - why do you think that is?

We're allowing people to live their dreams, in their own world. Every game is different. Everything you do in the game has an effect. And everything the computer AI teams do in the game has an effect.

You have a history of discovering hidden football gems (like Lionel Messi before he was the greatest), how do you go about that? Any hidden gems that you can give us a heads up on?

We have 1,500 scouts around the world watching players week in, week out – and not just first teams, but youth teams too. There are very strict guidelines which they follow, and there are loads of checks and balances.

There are lots of good young players around at the moment – Carlos Fierro, Agustin Allione, Alvarez Balatna, Max Meyer are a few examples.

How big is your database of players? And how do you manage to get so many and rate them all?

Over 550,000 players and staff are currently in our database. Our huge world scouting team is how we rate them all.

How's the early reaction been for FM14? Any strong reactions to anything in particular?

It's been pretty good. We've had less tech support requests than ever before, and getting a lot of positive feedback. We're also, as always, looking at all the constructive criticism that we get from our passionate community and reacting to those things that we agree with via updates to the game.

What are the new features of FM14 that you are excited about?

The thing I like best about FM14 isn't really a particular feature – it's how well all the huge amount of new features this year fit together. It's a very cohesive experience, and the best of our titles for that in the 21 years we've been making games.

Are you happy with how FM14 turned out?

Very. I'm playing it now (in between answering questions) and really enjoying it. And getting frustrated at times. Which is part of the fun and realism of being a football manager.

How much further can you take this game?

We already have a few thousand features that we haven't got around to, and more than 1,000 to go through in our next feature meetings. There are still loads of things we want to add to the game.

Any plans yet on FM 2015?

Yes – around 350 features are already decided for the game, but I'll talk about them this time next year.

Words: DANIEL POTTER / Photos: SUDESH PRAKASH

All Nations Cup 2013 at Knox City FC - Egan Lee Reserve - Knoxfield

Final Four Remain In ANC Quest For Glory

With the group stages now a thing of the in the past, supporters were looking forward to the knock stage and all of the incident and drama that goes with true cup tie football.
Would there be extra time needed, the prospect of golden goal and possible penalty kicks required, it could have everything……..how would it all pan out….only time would tell……!

Don't forget that you can follow the action and see the photos from the games on the Knox City FC website and Facebook page.

Scotland 7-0 Albania

Serbia v-3-0 Australia

Italy 2-1 France

Serbia 3-0 Australia

Italy 2 v France 1

Both nations had come out of their groups with 6 points, with Italy winning their group – Group 4, and France finishing second to last year's champions Serbia in theirs Group 1.

This was set to be a close encounter. Italy applied the screws from the outset and went 1-0 up on 4mins through Jacob Colosimo. Both teams created chance after chance and France had their fair share of opportunities to get level and indeed take the lead, but to no avail. Italy was then awarded a penalty on 39mins which was converted by Luca Santilli.

Could France come back against one of the tightest defences in the competition? They would certainly try. The second half was a repeat of the first with chances coming and chances going.

Time was running out for France, but finally with virtually the last kick of the game, they got their reward with a Nordine Haddu strike. It was though too little too late and Italy held firm to take this one out and take their place in next week's semi final

Man of the Match:
Alon Blumgart (France)

Ireland 3 v Hungary 2 (AET)

Traditional strong contenders and previous winners Ireland were up against new comers and Group Stage impressers Hungary.

Ireland were unbeaten, but still had some injury concerns and Hungary were keen to take advantage of that fact.

With both nations competing fiercely, this was going to be a good one. Ireland struck first through Kenneth Kilmurry in the 24th min, but then after a mix up between 2 Ireland defenders and the goal keeper, they conspired to gift Hungary a goal to make it 1-1 at the break.

Continuing to try and find the break, Hungary were awarded a penalty in the 65th min. Joe Ferenc converted and Hungary were 2-1 up. Ireland refused to lie down and both nations pushed, but it was Ireland that found the next break with 5mins to go through Sam Sweeney. This one was going to extra time!

Golden goal was the order of the day and while it started a little cagey, things started to open up and Ireland won a corner kick in the 97th min. Man of the Match Alan Mulcahy found himself unmarked at the back post and rose to thump his header into the Hungary goal. It was all over in very dramatic scenes

Man of the Match:
Alan Mulcahy (Ireland)

Serbia 3 v Australia 0

Last year's champions were out to claim their quarter final berth against Australia, who managed to qualify on goals scored in their final group fixture.

Serbia came flying out of the blocks and went ahead after 3 mins through Milos Lujic. To be fair, Serbia could have been further ahead but saw chance after chance go begging, indeed Australia shot stopper Nicholas Abougelis was in the votes for this one showing Serbia's dominance.

The second half produced more of the same and with Serbia crating the better chances, the score remained 1-0 and Australia were still in the game. A break away looked on the cards when Australia went forward, but finally with 7mins to go Serbia made it 2-0 Nenad Pavasovic and again 2mins later through man of the match Goran Zuric.

Serbia had claimed their semi-final berth and will now face Ireland, but will need to find their shooting boots and convert their opportunities if they are to progress

Man of the Match:
Goran Zoric (Serbia)

Scotland 7 v Albania 0

The last quarter final of the weekend with Scotland building over the tournament in typical fashion against Albania who had been blowing hot and cold until now.

The heat was coming out of the day, but both squads were feeling the effects of having players missing through injury and being away, so it was going to be interesting as to who would have the stronger quad remaining.

Would Scotland be able to cope with the temperatures? This was answered with an emphatic YES!

The first half saw Scotland the more dominant nation creating chances, but Albania were giving their all to keep the contest tight.

On 27mins Max Ethridge slotted home what would be the first of his eventual hat trick. A halftime score line of 2-0 to Scotland were looking ominous.

Keeping the pressure applied, Scotland ran out winners with goals from Max Ethridge (3), Wayne Gordon (2) and singles to Kevin Townsend and Jeremy Ortiz. Scotland are finding winning form just as the tournament moves towards the pointy end!!

Man of the Match:
Wayne Gordon (Scotland)

Semi Final Fixtures
Saturday 7th December 2013

Scotland v Italy
KO 1pm

Serbia v Ireland
KO 3pm

Ireland's Barry Devln attempts to clear the ball against Hungary.

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Vipers break clear at the top as Metro stun Fitzroy at the death

Men's NIKE V-League

There was no bigger clash to kick start round 11 than El Classico Pascoe Vale vs Vic Vipers with the Vipers getting the win the first time they met Pascoe would be out for revenge but it didn't work out that way with the Vipers dominating from start to finish leading by as much as 4-1 at one stage but finally winning the game 4-2 in the end and opening up a 6 point lead at the top of the table. Next up 2 mid tablesides took to the court with Ashburton expected to get the point over Mickleham, It was not the case though with Mickleham somehow breaking out to a 5-1 lead and sustained it until the dying stages when Ashburton pulled back 2 late goals but It wouldn't be enough with Mickleham claiming their second win of the season. Following Mickleham's shock win Albert Park would try to do the same against an out of sorts Hume but they never got close Hume winning 9-1 in their most commanding performance of the season. Final clash of the night was a real blockbuster between third and fourth on the table Fitzroy taking on Metropolitan in a game that had it all and Fitzroy had the game all but won with a minute to go Metropolitan pulled back 2 late goals to steal the game from Fitzroy at the death and round out another stunning round of NIKE V-League action.

Women's PEPSI WPL

To kick off round 9 we saw the undefeated Melbourne Uni taking on an in form Richmond. It was a huge shock to everyone who was inside the Futsal Oz stadium with Richmond playing a brilliant structure and hardly allowing Melbourne time on the ball and it showed on the scoreboard with Richmond running out 3-0 winners to finally end Melbourne's undefeated streak. Second clash of the night saw an out of sorts Pascoe Vale take on the lowly EFA Eagles, It showed on the scoreboard the champions class shining through winning 11-0 keeping a clean sheet in the process to get their season back on track. Following Pascoe's crushing win saw Ashburton take on a struggling Vipers desperate for 3 points, With Ashburton missing players and the Vipers close to full strength it finally clicked for manager Spiro Kargas as his side ran out 6-0 winners with a dominant display aswell as a clean sheet to keep themselves in touch with the top 4. To close out the night two of the youngest sides in the league took to the court one though in better form than the other and Fitzroy made it known they would be right in touch with the top winning 9-2 in a dominant display and making it 3 wins on the trot to round out a big night of women's futsal.

Melbourne Uni's five goal hero Marcella Marques (11) celebrates a second half goal with team mate Grace Kim.

Metro's X-Factor Juso Julardzija was on his game yet again and punches the air after his second goal to finish off the Vipers.

Ashburton swarm match winner Ricardo Castro (floor) After his late winner against Hume

Pascoe Vale's man of the match Robbie Armellini scores his third past keeper Steve Castvan with a very tidy placement.

Standings

NIKE V-LEAGUE Premiership

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Vic Vipers FC	11	10	1	0	0	64	37	+27	30
2 Pascoe Vale FC	11	8	3	0	0	66	34	+32	24
3 Metropolitan FC	11	7	3	0	1	75	53	+22	22
4 Fitzroy FC	11	7	3	0	1	61	43	+18	22
5 Ashburton FC	11	4	5	0	2	51	53	-2	14
6 Hume FC	11	3	6	0	2	57	47	+10	11
7 Mickleham FC	11	2	9	0	0	45	81	-36	6
8 Albert Park FC	11	0	11	0	0	28	99	-71	0

Pepsi Womens WV-LEAGUE

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Melbourne Uni FC	9	8	1	0	0	57	12	+45	24
2 F.C Richmond	8	6	1	0	1	46	22	+24	19
3 Fitzroy FC	9	6	3	0	0	34	39	-5	18
4 Pascoe Vale FC	8	5	3	0	0	48	12	+36	15
5 Vic Vipers FC	9	2	5	0	2	27	34	-7	8
6 Ashburton FC	8	2	5	0	1	25	50	-25	7
7 E.F.A Eagles	8	2	6	0	0	21	47	-26	6
8 Heidelberg FC	9	1	8	0	0	15	57	-42	3

State League Championship

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	GD	Pts
1 CF Brunswick	11	10	0	0	1	75	41	+34	31
2 Moreland FC	11	7	3	0	1	64	45	+19	22
3 FC Balwyn	10	7	3	0	0	71	42	+29	21
4 Brimbank FC	11	4	5	0	2	61	81	-20	14
5 FC Carlton	10	3	4	0	3	50	43	+7	12
6 FC Melbourne	11	4	7	0	0	58	54	+4	12
7 FC Northcote	10	3	6	0	1	37	49	-12	10
8 FC Essendon	10	0	10	0	0	27	88	-61	0

State League One

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	GD	Pts
1 FC Collingwood	11	9	2	0	0	55	27	+28	27
2 Brighton FC	11	8	1	0	2	62	30	+32	26
3 FC Prahran	11	5	2	0	4	54	39	+15	19
4 CF South Melb	11	6	4	0	1	54	45	+9	19
5 Toorak FC	11	4	5	0	2	37	44	-7	14
6 FC Hawthorn	11	4	6	0	1	48	47	+1	13
7 Coburg Athletic	11	2	9	0	0	32	64	-32	6
8 FC Footscray	11	1	10	0	0	35	81	-46	3

State League Two

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Doncaster FC	11	9	2	0	0	49	29	+20	27
2 FC Preston	11	8	3	0	0	48	36	+12	24
3 FC Richmond	11	6	5	0	0	53	57	-4	18
4 Mcleod FC	11	5	4	0	2	51	48	+3	17
5 FC Geelong	11	4	6	0	1	68	49	+19	13
6 EFA Eagles	11	4	6	0	1	47	52	-5	13
7 FC St Kilda	11	4	7	0	0	50	58	-8	12
8 Elsternwick FC	11	2	9	0	0	35	49	-14	6

EFA Eagles captain Maddie Stockdale celebrates with debutant Georgia Alberti (15) after she completed her hat trick.

Futsal Oz Scoreboard

Results

PEPSI Women's V-League Premiership
Friday 29th November
7:30pm - FC Richmond 3-0 Mellb Uni
8:15pm - EFA Eagles 0-11 Pascoe Vale
9:00pm - Ashburton FC 0-6 Vic Vipers
9:45pm - Fitzroy FC 9-2 Heidelberg FC

NIKE Men's V-League Premiership
5:00pm - Pascoe Vale 2-4 Vic Vipers
6:00pm - Mickleham FC 5-3 Ashburton
7:00pm - Albert Park FC 1-9 Hume FC
8:00pm - Metropolitan FC 7-6 Fitzroy

Next Week's Clashes

PEPSI WV-League
Friday 6th December
7:30pm - Richmond vs Ashburton FC
8:15pm - Vic Vipers FC vs Heidelberg
9:00pm - Pascoe Vale FC vs Melb Uni
9:45pm - EFA Eagles vs Fitzroy FC

NIKE Men V-League Premiership
Sunday 8th December
5:00pm - Metropolitan vs Albert Park
6:00pm - Fitzroy FC vs Pascoe Vale FC
7:00pm - Hume FC vs Mickleham FC
8:00pm - Ashburton FC vs Vic Vipers

Top Goal Scorers

Mens
1. Ricardo Castro - Ashburton FC - 17
2. Adam Cooper - Vic Vipers FC - 16
3. Sofiane Soufi - Pascoe Vale FC - 16
4. Juso Julardzija - Metropolitan - 15
5. Ernie Simsek - Metropolitan - 13

Women's
1. Marcela Marques - Melb Uni - 22
2. Letizia Sammut - Melb Uni - 12
3. Ili Jakab - Pascoe Vale FC - 10
4. Christine Duffy - Pascoe Vale FC - 9
5. Azize Erenli - FC Richmond - 8

Welcome to FUTSAL OZ Our Programs

Social League competitions
• Men's & Women's Social Leagues
Create a team for fun weekly scheduled matches
• Mixed Social Leagues
Create a team with men & women (min 2 women)
• Junior Leagues (boys & girls)
(5 to 18 year olds)
Create a team for fun weekly scheduled matches
• Elite Leagues (boys & girls)
Only for elite players –

Training
• Social League training
for teams & individuals – improve skills & fitness, including goal keeper training
• Elite training
high level training includes goal keeper training
• Junior training
from beginners to elite
(see 'ALL Juniors – Boys & Girls 'from 2 years to 16 years of age')

Juniors
• Preschool program
Fun way to start the ball rolling during school hours
(1 to 5 year olds)
• Junior Oz Clinics
Beginners introduction to Futsal
(3 to 9 years old)
• School Holiday Program
Every school holidays Futsal all day training & games
• Social Junior Leagues
Create a team, for fun weekly scheduled matches
(Mixed boys & Girls)

Elite Juniors
• Futsal training
INNER City FC for teams & individuals– skills, tactics & match (twice a week + match)
• Elite Futsal League
Join an elite Club, elite skills, technic, tactics & fitness, includes representative squads interstate and overseas tournaments.
• Elite Futsal training
high level training includes goal keeper training

Follow the V LEAGUE Premiership
And the pepsi WV LEAGUE Premiership
futsaloz.com.au
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You Tube

Sydney FC takes top spot in NYL

Tomasz Ng

A top of the table clash between Sydney FC and Melbourne Victory headlined Round 6, with the Sky Blues taking the points to move clear at the summit.

Both teams went into the game on the back of defeats which they would have felt disappointed with, and it was Sydney that took the early initiative by capitalising on some slack Victory defending.

Mitch Mallia again starred for Sydney, opening the scoring on two minutes, while Alec Urosevski added a second just a couple of minutes later.

Christopher Cristaldo pulled it back to 2-1, but it was Mallia who was again on hand to score for Sydney, punishing Victory for sleeping on the stroke of half time.

A chip from Anthony Proia made it 3-2 mid-way through the second half, but Victory were unable to complete the comeback, and suffered a second successive loss.

Newcastle Jets have replaced Victory in second spot following a 3-1 win over Central Coast Mariners.

Coming into the game with 12 goals in their previous two games, the Jets flew into a 2-0 lead at half time thanks to Kale Bradbery and Radovan Pavicevic.

The Mariners came out in the second half with a lot more intent, having been outplayed in the first half.

Adam Kwasnik put his name on the scoresheet for another week running, but the away side just could not find the equaliser their play deserved.

Instead it was Mitch Cooper who sealed the points for the Jets, taking his goal well and making sure their rivals remain winless this season.

Having overtaken the Mariners in the table last week, Perth Glory continued their resurgence with a stunning win over Brisbane Roar at Goodwin Park.

Glory have shipped the most goals this season so far, but went a long way to reducing their goal difference with a 7-2 result.

Dnumba Makeche and Adrian Zahra scored braces while Harry O'Brien, Isaka Cernak and Brandon O'Neill scored one each.

Patrick Theodore and Brandon Borrello scored for the Roar to make it 3-2 at one stage soon after half time, but in the end Perth were far too good on the day.

Youngster Daniel De Silva received rave reviews following the match, which would no doubt please senior coach Alistair Edwards.

Two weeks ago nobody would have even dreamt of this result, but Glory has now pulled up to the midfield pack with this win.

One team that has to watch their backs is Melbourne Heart, who have failed to win since Round 2, and have not looked in great form.

Playing their first home game this season at Epping Stadium, they were comprehensively beaten 4-1 by Adelaide United, who produced a highly impressive first half display.

Jacob Melling and Ryan Kitto were impressive for United, playing key parts in the goals.

Melling's goal was a deflected 30 yard effort while Nikola Milesunic scored a brace either side of half time to take Adelaide to a 3-0 lead after 53 minutes.

Jordon O'Doherty then scored a lovely chip over the Heart defence to make it 4-0, while Milesunic should've added to his tally as well.

Heart had a much better second half, but were only able to grab a consolation goal at the death as Andrew Cartano combed with Ben Garuccio to finish past Reds' keeper John Hall.

Western Sydney Wanderers became the first team to win at the AIS fields on the weekend, with a three goal second half to secure their second win in a row.

The first half was an even one, with both sides having chances to take the lead.

But it was all Wanderers in the second half, as Kwabena Appiah scored two penalties in the space of six minutes, while Jake McGing added a third via a long range strike.

Adam Kwasnik (Mariners)

Kwabame Appiah (Wanderers)

Mitch Malia (Sydney FC)

Results

Sydney FC: 3 Mitchell Mallia (2', 45'), Alec Urosevski (5'),
Melbourne Victory FC: 2 Christopher Cristaldo (31'), Anthony Proia (68')

Perth Glory 7 (Makeche (2), Harry O'Brien and Isaka Cernak, Zahra (2),Brandon O'Neill)
Brisbane Roar 2 (Patrick Theodore and Brandon Borrello)

AIS 0
Western Sydney Wanderers 3 (Appiah 50 (pen), 56 (pen), Jake McGing 65)

Melbourne Heart 1 (Cartanos 90)
Adelaide United 4 (Melling 4, Milesunic 22, 53, O'Doherty 86)

Central Coast Mariners Youth 1 (Kwasnik 68')
Newcastle Jets Youth 3 (Bradbery 15', Pavicevic 35', Cooper 90+2')

NYL Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	P
1 Sydney FC	5	4	0	1	13	6	7	12
2 Melbourne Victory	5	3	1	1	14	7	7	10
3 Newcastle Jets	5	3	0	2	14	8	6	9
4 Brisbane Roar	5	2	2	1	11	9	2	8
5 Adelaide United	5	2	2	1	6	7	-1	8
6 AIS	5	2	1	2	12	13	-1	7
7 Melbourne Heart	5	2	1	2	5	7	-2	7
8 Wanderers	5	1	1	3	6	10	-4	4
9 Perth Glory	5	1	0	4	5	15	-10	3
10 Mariners	5	0	2	3	3	7	-4	2

Next Round

Saturday, 7 December 2013
Adelaide United v Brisbane Roar
Parra Hills
KO 3:30 PM

Sunday, 8 December 2013
Perth Glory v **A IS**
Intiga Stadium
KO 1:30 PM

Sunday, 8 December 2013
Sydney FC v Melbourne Heart
WIN Stadium, Wollongong
KO 2:15 PM

Sunday, 8 December 2013
Melbourne Victory v Newcastle Jets
AAMI Park
KO 2:00PM

Sunday, 8 December 2013
Wanderers v Mariners
Cook Park, St Marys
KO 4:00PM

Mulching in Melbourne

Zee Ko

A side of Welsh wizardry

Welsh NT captain Jessica Fishlock

"It was hot, it was warmer than 23°C. The thermometer was wrong."

Jess Fishlock shakes her head almost in disbelief at the recollection of that sapping afternoon just a week ago, as a resurgent Melbourne Victory team took on Perth Glory at nib Stadium. The hosts had been giving as good as they got, eager to atone for the shattering loss last season as penalties sealed Finals heartbreak against this very opposition.

Things had changed since then though. Penalty hero Jess McDonald retook and scored the winning spot kick, but returned to America to play in the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) and was replaced by none other than Perth's maverick striker Lisa De Vanna. Making an appearance this time too was a familiar impish, peroxide blonde presence in the middle of the park as Jess Fishlock made her long awaited return for Victory.

The Welsh national team captain arrived on these shores last year with no small amount of hype, and quickly endeared herself to the Melbourne faithful with a series of all-action displays.

Arriving on guest player terms, the diminutive midfielder set the competition alight with her skill on the ball and willingness to interact with adoring fans.

Then as quickly as she'd arrived, she was gone.

Six games, two goals and a W-League Player of the Year nomination later, Fishlock had to head for home as her guest stint expired. How Victory could have used her presence on the field, as they fell agonisingly at the final hurdle to a sparkling Sydney FC outfit on home turf. But Fishlock wasn't done yet with Melbourne, nor the city with her as she returned again this season to settle some unfinished business.

"I was devastated I had to leave last year when I did, I had such a great time and I said straight away that I would come back," she says. "The league fits in perfectly with the summer leagues around the world so that's a good thing. There's a bit of unfinished business, I do like Melbourne, I love the city, I love the girls and what they're trying to do and what they're trying to achieve so I'm just excited to be back and to get it going again. And the coffee yah, love the coffee."

* * * * *

It's been a busy year away for the 2012 English FA Player of the Year though. Far from taking it easy, Fishlock spent the Australian winter plying her trade in warmer climes after signing a contract with NWSL team Seattle Reign, before also moving on loan to Scottish Women's Premier League side Glasgow City.

"It's been an eventful year to be honest, since the last time I was here," Fishlock admits. "I went straight to Seattle, which is probably the most professional environment I've ever been and it was very intense. Everything about the American experience was intense, but it was probably the best thing I've ever done. I had a great time in Seattle, then going to Glasgow was great as well because I was near home and around people who I love and I miss. I'm actually struggling a little bit to settle in here now, I've been home for so long. It's good to be back but I think the initial couple of weeks are probably going to be a bit difficult."

Needless to say, there's been little time for rest so far but the 26-year-old understands just how short careers are in women's football. The incessant globetrotting is a part of that, as she strives to make the most of her time in the sport.

"I have had a little bit of a break here and there, not probably a long consistent time but as long as I have a week here and there, that gives me enough to refuel and re-energise," Fishlock explains. "I would have hated to have just stayed in one kind of situation and not really experienced the world. It's not ideal, the travelling is tough but when you've got enough time to really settle where you are, then it's definitely worth it because Australia is a great country and it's fun to be here."

Arriving in Melbourne late last Wednesday evening, the Welsh international was parachuted straight into Victory's starting line up against Perth and tasked with running the show despite tired legs and a weary body.

The jet lag was starting to set in, but you could hardly tell judging by her first twenty minutes. Fishlock was here and there and everywhere, covering enough ground for two people as she harried the Glory attackers before driving deep into opposition territory whenever she got the ball. It's a sight for sore eyes, and one Victory fans have been waiting for since her early departure last season.

"I think my body will need a lot more time to adjust to this [compared to last year] because I've been travelling so much. But I'm okay with that and I hope Melbourne are okay with that. I'm getting older so I need more time. I think in a few weeks, just before Christmas, I'll probably be hitting the levels that I will be okay with."

* * * * *

23 minutes into the game against Perth and the scores are still level. Fishlock is visibly exhausted after chasing a long ball over the top, looking like a mere mortal for once as she stops to catch her breath. Then all of a sudden, the ball is passed to her feet, with defenders to either side of her and closing in fast. The midfielder takes a step forward and to her right, then looks up and hits the ball firm and true towards goal. Never mind that she is wide on the left of the field, or that she is at least 25 yards away from goal, or that there are scores of players in her way…

The ball's trajectory is straight and true, before it dips and swerves past the outstretched arm of the Perth goalkeeper and nestles into the far corner of the goal. The TV commentators can hardly believe it, nor can the home fans but it's a satisfied grin from the one player who's abruptly turned the contest on its head.

"It was a nice angle really, I knew what I wanted to do and how I wanted to hit it, where I wanted the ball to go and I knew it was going to dip at the last minute," Fishlock recalls with a smile. "I kind of got the ball and to be honest I didn't want to run with it because I was too tired and thought I'm just gonna shoot. I couldn't even celebrate to be honest, I was too tired so thankfully it went in."

Victory's Welsh wizard was well and truly back.

BRAZIL'S STAGNANT STADIUM SCHEDULE

Latin Wrap

Francis Fields

Exactly a week after the tragic collapse of the Corinthians Arena in Sao Paulo that left two workers dead, few things could damage the image of Brazil more than violent street protests during the World Cup.

Demonstrations during June's Confederations Cup, a precursor as the World Cup warm-up tournament caught Brazil's institutional and military police by surprise. There will be no surprises this time, on either side.

Rio state police are getting training from their French counterparts, and followers of the Black Bloc anarchist movement have announced plans for demonstrations, starting with the opening World Cup match on June 12 in Sao Paulo. A Black Bloc page lists demonstrations for June 13 in Natal, Salvador and Cuiaba, followed by six more protests in six cities on June 14 and 15. And more are promised.

Security is on the agenda as football's world governing body FIFA meets in the run-up to Friday's World Cup draw.

At the peak of this year's protests, 1 million people took to the streets across Brazil in a single day, complaining initially of higher bus fares, corruption and poor public services, and then extending to the billons being spent on the World Cup and 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

At least six people died in connection with the protests.

''There will be no World Cup,'' became one of the mass movement's most popular chants. ''FIFA go home.'' was another.

The protests have continued, growing less frequent but more violent, and authorities must prepare even if the threats never materialize.

Jerome Valcke, the top FIFA official in charge of the World Cup, said recently the football tournament would have ''the highest level of security you can imagine'' to contain any violence.

Efforts are underway to improve the image of Brazil's military police, whose troops can look menacing patrolling the streets in light armor. They have been given new uniforms, including stylish berets, and lessons in managing social disturbances, and many are visible at high-profile places such as Cobacabana beach.

Our very own Sydney FC battle in the women's unofficial Club World Cup against Colo-Colo, Chelsea and Japan's League and Cup champions.

Few would have imagined that a World Cup in Brazil, the sport's spiritual homeland and most famous name, might cause problems.

This World Cup - opening June 12 in Sao Paulo and closing July 13 in Rio - might go down as the best in history, and Brazil could showcase its friendly people, hospitality and love of a good party. A successful World Cup could pave the way for the 2016 Rio Olympics, which will cost about $15 billion in public and private money.

A victory might also help President Dilma Rousseff, who is up for re-election shortly after the Cup ends.

Brazil will be among the four favorites along with Germany, defending champion Spain and Lionel Messi's Argentina. The other four seeded teams are Belgium, Switzerland, Uruguay and Colombia. Perennial contenders such as Italy, France and the Netherlands are also in the mix.

If Brazil fails to win its sixth World Cup, all bets are off.

''I have a fear that if Brazil does not win the World Cup, people will be very disappointed and all these expenses generated with the World Cup will be questioned,'' said Felipe Miranda, a telecommunication engineer in Rio. ''Following the same line, winning the World Cup may be the only way to keep people calm. They will think it was expensive, but worth it.''

There are worries in three other areas. On the subject of stadia, at least three World Cup stadiums will not be finished by the end of December as FIFA requested. FIFA said the stadiums in Sao Paulo, Curitiba and Cuiaba would miss the deadline because of construction delays.

FIFA said the stadiums in Cuiaba and Curitiba would be ready by the end of February. It is unclear when the stadium in Sao Paulo will be done. Two workers died there last week in a construction accident, which also damaged the stadium. FIFA said it was confident it would be ready for the opening match.

Brazil is using 12 new or refurbished stadiums - FIFA required only eight - as a cost of about $3.5 billion. The cost has risen by about $430 million in the last year, according to government figures, due to delays and cost overruns. The original estimate was about $2.2 billion.

Four of the 12 stadiums are seen as ''white elephants:'' Manaus, Cuiaba, Natal and Brasilia. A judge in the state of Amazonia suggested the Manaus stadium be used afterward for prisoner processing.

Brazil has decided against opening more routes for foreign air carriers for the World Cup, certain it can handle the crunch.

Some fear Brazil could be stretched, its creaking airports already strained. The continent-size country has limited rail service, the road network is underdeveloped and overtaxed, and flying will be the only alternative for most people traveling to the 12 host cities.

Embratur, the state-run tourism agency, has said rates may increase up to 500 percent during the World Cup in some hotels offered by the FIFA-appointed agency MATCH Services. The Brazilian justice ministry has asked hotels to explain, and Brazil President Dilma Rousseff has created a committee to monitor hotel price rates and increases.

The government may have little clout because hotels are free to set prices. Local newspaper reported this month that hostels in some host cities were charging $435 per night, per person, for a room with a shared bath.

Online travel services show prices for some mid-range hotels in Rio topping $1,500 a night during the World Cup.

WOMENS CHAMPS IN JAPAN

Copa Libertadores 2012 champion Colo-Colo of Chile are in Japan this month to compete for world glory in the Mobcast Cup.

Our very own Sydney FC are also represented as invitees.

A Women's Club World Cup might be closer than anyone thought. The Mobcast Cup has begun taking place in Japan in December, with European champions Wolfsburg from Germany withdrawing to make way for Chelsea alongside the aforementioned sides whom will participate alongside Japan's League and Cup winners, INAC Kobe Leonessa and NTV Beleza. In essence it looks a lot like a test-run of a Women's Club World Cup as it is, should all of those teams remain committed.

The Arena Corinthians in Sao Paulo is one of three Brazilian stadiums behind schedule for the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

To be sure, there's still a long way to go until that comes to be, FIFA's Executive Committee was informed of the Task Force for Women's Football's proposal to explore the idea of a Women's Club World Cup.

There was already a moment of history for the FIFA Executive Committee, as three women – Lydia Nsekera (Burundi) and co-opted members Moya Dodd (Australia) and Sonia Bien-Aime (Turks and Caicos Islands) – took part in a FIFA Executive Committee meeting.

There are plenty of logistical obstacles with a Women's Club World Cup competition, of course, as women's football clubs around the world struggle to make ends meet. There are the basics: Where and when will the competition be held, how many teams will participate, what sort of prize money guarantees would there be and so forth.

Adding to that is the very issue of likely needing to add sub-competitions for objective qualification (as opposed to just selecting teams/leagues), which adds to the travel and and financial burdens of teams.

Europe has the UEFA Champions League for women, won last year by VfL Wolfsburg, who upset the defending champions Olympique Lyon in the final. South America held a Copa Libertadores Femenina, won by Chile's Colo Colo in last year's edition. But what about North America? Does the NWSL champion earn the automatic berth? It would be nice to see the U.S. league's champion — Portland Thorns FC in this inaugural season — have to fight the elements of being on the road in CONCACAF, but it isn't realistic to think such a tournament could be executed.

And what about Africa, Asia and Oceania? How would those slots be determined? Football Federation Australia is extremely fortunate to have the W-League champion inducted as invitees.

Fans got a small taste of what a competition like this might look like last November, when the 2012 Mobcast Cup International Women's Club Championship took place in Japan. Japan's powerhouse INAC Kobe Leonessa finished runners-up to then European champion Lyon, while NTV Beleza of Japan beat Australia's Canberra United in the third place match.

One criticism of the men's Champions League is that UEFA marched too loyally to the drumbeat of big capital and neglected the equity principle. One gets the impression that they try to avoid that trap for the ladies. The Mobcast cup seems a great idea. Hopefully it will establish itself and become a feature in the calendar, and if FIFA wants to give it a higher status and find other sponsors.

It would also seem that Japan's staging of this Mobcast Cup competition would make the country a natural place to test out a proper Women's Club World Cup, although UEFA's idea of staging the Women's Champions League final in the same city and in the same week as the men's final has proven successful. Japan hosted six of the last eight men's Club World Cups, but Morrocco will host the tournament this December.

Coaches put through their paces at State Coaching Conference

By Russ Gibbs

Nearly 120 coaches descended on the University of Canberra over the weekend of 9th-10th November to take part in the Annual Capital Football State Coaching Conference eager to learn the finer points and nuances of the second edition of the FFA National Football Curriculum.

The Curriculum subtitled 'The Roadmap to International Success' was officially released in September this year introducing detailed training sessions and models to enable coaches to deliver the methods central to the implementation of the playing philosophy outlined in the first version in 2009 and not even a spell of adverse weather could dampen the enthusiasm of the coaches gathered in Canberra.

Upon its release FFA CEO David Gallop commented that "The FFA National Football Curriculum not only provides answers, but explains the philosophy behind how we should play and illustrates practical steps that bring the thinking to life in training and matches. The first version of the National Curriculum in 2009 was a breakthrough in setting out a broad agenda, but this second version is presented in a way that will resonate in schools, clubs, academies and elite development pathways, in fact anywhere football is played."

The Capital Football State Coaching Conference provided a practical learning tool for the coaches in attendance with the central theme of the Conference bringing to life the Skill Acquisition and Game Training building blocks outlined in the Curriculum. The event catered for both community and advanced coaches, with several different theoretical and practical demonstrations tailored to particular coaching levels, and was well received by all who took part over the two days.

"The State Coaching Conference is a vital and very important part of our long-term Strategic Planning," Capital Football Technical Director Warren Grieve said. "Being able to run this conference enables us to deliver the key messages and points of the FFA National Curriculum to local and interstate coaches to ensure that the Curriculum becomes an invaluable tool to ensuring the National Premier League clubs are able to succeed at every level where the next generation of potential international players are developed."

Located at the Ann Harding Centre and on the playing fields at the University of Canberra, the event kicked off on Saturday morning with an introduction and welcome from Grieve before it was heads down and onto the first theory based module giving the coaches an overview of the updated Curriculum. Further advanced theoretical sessions followed on 'The Team Model as an expression of the National Playing Style' and 'Becoming a 'World Leader' in the World Game,' whilst the Community Coaches were given a practical session on Skill Acquisition, The Discovery Phase and Game Training.

But it wasn't all classroom based activities for the Advanced Coaches with plenty of practical sessions to demonstrate how effective the training modules can be. Practical sessions were led by FFA Head of Coach Education Rob Sherman, ACTAS Head Coach Pat McCann, Capital Football Game Development Manager and former professional footballer Neil Orr and Grieve and on the Sunday focused on 'Skill Acquisition Game Training' and 'Match Analysis leading to a Model Performance Phase Training Session'.

Despite the drizzling rain the practical sessions were well received and the course wrapped up with a networking opportunity for the attendant coaches.

Lady Reds Notch First Win of Season

By Katie Lambeski

The W-League returned after an international break for the Matildas fixtures against China PR, and did so in fashion. Adelaide United notched their first win of the season over Newcastle Jets, Brisbane Roar powered to a win over Western Sydney Wanderers and Melbourne Victory reigned supreme over the Glory in Perth.

Although we were denied a tantalising fixture between Sydney FC and Canberra United (now rescheduled for January 29, 2014), the Sky Blues went global as they went to compete in the International Women's Club Championship in Japan. They got themselves into a semi-final against Chelsea Ladies FC after defeating NTV Beleza in a narrow 1-0 win through an Emma Kete goal in the 61st minute.

Despite taking some time to get in to stride, an organised side eventually get in to the match and once they scored, didn't let up. Caitlin Foord and Nicola Bolger, the assured hands, came on as well-timed subs in the second half to keep Sydney FC steady. It worked as Alen Stajcic's side saw out the match to advance to the semi-finals.

A seven minute goal spree in the first half from Adelaide United, led by a brace from Tiarn Powell, was enough to get comfortably past Newcastle Jets at Burton Park last Saturday. Newcastle Jets arguably started the better of the two as momentum was theirs early on, but were punished for not taking advantage as Adelaide's goal spree began.

Powell scored her and Adelaide's first on the 25th minute, after latching on to a ball on the left and finished well. Gummer made it two up after a smart finish in the box from a set-piece, continuing her goal-scoring form. A stunningly powerful shot at distance from Powell put the result beyond doubt at the 32nd minute. Despite the result being all but decided, the Jets tried to get something out of the game and made the play late in the second half, resulting in a Jasmin Courtenay goal in stoppage time.

Catherine Cannuli (Wanderers) tries to squeeze past Brisbane Roar's Laura Alleway and Clare Polkinghorne. Photo: GEORGE MARIN

The Western Sydney Wanderers' early struggles this season has continued, this time at the hands of Brisbane Roar, slumping to a 4-1 loss at Marconi Stadium. Katrina Gorry's standout form continued, netting a second-half hat-trick to lead the Roar. It was a tale of two halves, as the hosts managed to lead 1-0 through a Catherine Cannuli chipped shot at half-time in a slow opening from the visitors.

But two goals immediately after half-time (from substitute Hayley Raso and Gorry) in three minutes turned the game right around. The game hung in the balance for long parts in the second half, but Gorry put paid to that when she finished from an Amy Chapman cross. She went on to complete her hat-trick in stoppage time.

A jetlagged Jess Fishlock marked her return to Melbourne Victory and W-League with a stunning long-range goal early, setting up an impressive 3-1 win over Perth Glory at NIB Stadium. Caitlin Friend and Lisa De Vanna bookended the goal from Fishlock to round out the win, despite a late consolation goal from Christina Julien.

Perth had some opportunities early in the half, mainly through corners, but didn't take full toll of them. Victory only got better in the second half through their fluid and entertaining front third, and despite not always taking full advantage of chances, finished off the game. Victory attacking midfielder Enza Barilla was the provider for both De Vanna and Friend's goals, who rewarded the brilliant passes from Barilla. The Victory look like they are finally starting to gel after the horror opening week, add the presence of Fishlock, it is only making Dave Edmondson's side stronger.

This weekend, Victory are back at home to open the round, this time hosting Newcastle Jets at Kingston Heath Soccer Complex on Saturday at 3pm. Perth versus Adelaide in Perth will be an interesting fixture, one to watch as Adelaide have hit some form while Perth are at the opposite end of the spectrum. Brisbane will be hoping to exact some revenge for their Round 1 loss to Canberra, heading to MacKellar Park on Sunday at 3pm.

REMARKABLE SYDNEY FC COMEBACK NOT ENOUGH TO DEFEAT CHELSEA IN JAPAN

Sydney FC have come close to a thrilling comeback as they lost 3-2 to Chelsea Ladies FC in the semi-finals of the mobcast International Women's Club Championships at Kanko Stadium in Okayama, Japan on Wednesday.

The Sky Blues went down by three goals to their English opponents, but strikes from Renee Rollason and Jodie Taylor in a six minute spell late in the second half gave them hope of an unlikely comeback.

It was to no avail however and Chelsea were able to hang on and claim a place in the International Women's Club Championship Final on Sunday against Japanese Champions INAC Kobe Leonessa, who defeated Chile's Colo Colo 3-0 in the other semi-final.

The Sky Blues will remain in Japan to compete against Colo Colo for third place in a game which takes place on Saturday afternoon in Kagoshima, kick off at 1510 AEDT.

Rd 3 Results

Perth Glory 1
(Julien 84m)
Melbourne Victory 3
(Fishlock 24m, Friend 32m, De Vanna 82m)

Western Sydney Wanderers 1
(Catherine Cannuli 43')
Brisbane Roar 4
(Katrina Gorry 49', 81', 90', Hayley Raso 51')

Adelaide United 3
Newcastle Jets 1

Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	P
1 Sydney FC	2	2	0	0	9	1	8	6
2 Canberra United	2	2	0	0	5	0	5	6
3 Brisbane Roar	3	2	0	1	7	4	3	6
4 Melbourne Victory	3	2	0	1	6	6	0	6
5 Adelaide United	3	1	1	1	4	4	0	4
6 Perth Glory	3	1	0	2	6	8	-2	3
7 Wanderers	3	0	1	2	2	7	-5	1
8 Newcastle Jets	3	0	0	3	3	12	-9	0

Next Round

Sat 7 Dec 13 3:00pm
Melbourne Victory Vs Newcastle Jets
Kingston Heath, Melbourne

Sat 7 Dec 13 5:00pm
Perth Glory Vs Adelaide United
Percy Doyle Reserve, Duncraig

Sun 8 Dec 13 3:00pm
Canberra UnitedVs Brisbane Roar
McKellar Park

Sydney FC Vs Wanderers*
Postponed due to Sydney FC's involvement in the Women's Club Championship in Japan.

The Lady Reds get that winning feeling at long last. Photo: ADAM BUTLER

Sydney FC fly the Aussie flag in Japan and now face Chile's Colo Colo for the bronze medal.

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GUI FINKLER

MELBOURNE VICTORY FC

Photo: ADAM BUTLER

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Barclays Premier League

Andrew Bishara

City's home fortress

The record reads: played 7, won 7; goals scored 29; goals conceded just a measly two. This is Manchester City's home record at the moment – and compared to the rest of the league, it's a fortress.

Chelsea has six wins from seven, while league leaders Arsenal have five wins from six. But the difference is that no side is as devastating than City are when it plays at home.

It put four pass bitter rivals, Manchester United; six passed Tottenham and seven passed Norwich City. No team has come close to beating City at its home stadium of Etihad.

Last weekend, there was talk that perhaps Swansea City, known for its cavalier style of football, could be the first to take points off the 2011-12 champions.

The final score read 3-0 to City. Alvaro Negredo, the $30 million signing from Sevilla, opened the scoring with a stunning free-kick. It was the Spaniard's sixth goal so far this season and his partnership with fellow striker, Argentine Sergio Aguero is showing promise to be the best in the league.

In the second half, it was the Samir Nasri show. Two cracking goals – the first a cracking solo effort, thanks to a brilliant Yaya Toure pass; the second, a deft finish following a cross from Pablo Zabaleta.

The Frenchman had been in iffy form since his transfer from Arsenal two seasons ago. Under former manager Roberto Mancini, there were problems and Nasri struggled to produce anything that warranted his high price tag.

But under Manuel Pelligrini, the French international has blossomed, reaching his peak form that he produced for Arsenal back in 2010-11.

Pelligrini was quick to point out just how important Nasri is to the team.

"Samir thinks he is an important player again," said the Chilean. "He is playing free and happy – and the way the team is playing is helping.

"All of you know that he is a big player. Before he arrived here at City he played three or four years for Arsenal. I played against him in the Champions League and he was very good. Now I know again that he is a big player."

The way City play at home shows just how dangerous it can be when it fully clicks into gear. Swansea boss, Michael Laudrup said that it was one of the favourites, if it started playing like that away from home.

"At home, City are the best team in the league,' he said. 'What I have seen here today just reinforces what I have seen in other games.

'They were one of my two favourites for the title, along with Chelsea, even before today, and if they can start winning games away, they are going to take some stopping."

In fact, out of the 25 points it has collected this season, 21 have come from the Etihad, with only four points coming when City has travelled. Its away form has been the topic of much discussion (barring the poor form of England 'keeper Joe Hart).

Which makes its away clashes with West Bromwich and Southampton all that more important. The Sky Blues are currently third on the table, six points behind Arsenal. If it wants to start making that promise that it will win the league, it could start with a win against the Baggies.

Man City can do no wrong at home and continue to thump all-comers

EPL Preview

Weeks ago, the writing was on the wall for Newcastle boss, Alan Pardew. Many thought he would be one of the first to go, after the Magpies poor start to the season.

However, since that bitter 2-1 loss to Tyneside rivals Sunderland, one month ago, the Magpies have picked up its form dramatically: starting with its impressive 2-0 win over Chelsea.

That result was followed by a 1-0 win over Tottenham at White Hart Lane, largely thanks to 'keeper Tim Krul, before consecutive 2-1 wins over Norwich City and West Bromwich.

Now, Newcastle is sitting sixth on the table on 23 points with its consistent form owing much to its newfound resistance, according to defender Davide Santon.

"Last season we lost these tight games. Now, if we concede a goal we don't take a step back and wait for the pressure, we regroup and try to score ourselves,"

We know our shape. The balance is excellent and the players are used to it," Santon added.

"The confidence and calmness is there now so we don't collapse after we've conceded. That is the huge change from last season. I think it comes from knowing that we have so much of a threat in attack."

However, the excellent run of form has caused some squad problems for Pardew, with squad players are knocking on the door, demanding a return to first time action.

Pardew has kept a settled side over the past five weeks, but substitutes Hatem Ben Arfa, Steven Taylor, Vurnon Anita, Papiss Cisse and Sylvain Marveaux all demanding answers about the future.

But the Newcastle has kept the news at bay, insisting that everyone will get their chance to impress.

"They have just got to hope the chance comes and then you take it. You have to work hard on the training ground so you are ready because they will get the call."

Pardew believes that the demand of his players means that his team have the depth that it didn't have last season when it struggled with injuries and finished 16th.

"I have had a few knocks on my door this morning from people who want to play," said Pardew.

"They are desperate to play and we have got real competition which we didn't have last year which does bode well.

"I would not call them fringe players, they are first team players who are out of the team at the minute.

"We will need to freshen it up and change it from game to game because there are so many games. Injuries will come, there is no doubt about that, we are in a better position to cope and I hope that is proven."

The depth of the squad has certainly helped Pardew when the chips are down. Previously, he was stuck with what he had; but now, he has the ability to change personnel at will – especially when they don't perform.

Tactically flexibility is now an option; so too the choices to rotate players when the cup competitions start rolling around.

Over the next couple of weeks, Pardew is sure to test out his "reserve" players and give them a run. But first up, it faces Swansea City mid-week before traveling to Old Trafford to face Manchester United.

Follow Andrew on Twitter @_andrewbishara

ENGLAND EPL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Arsenal	14	11	1	2	29	10	+19	34	W W W L W
2 Chelsea	14	9	3	2	28	14	+14	30	W W W D L
3 Manchester City	14	9	1	4	40	14	+26	28	W W W L W
4 Liverpool	14	8	3	3	30	17	+13	27	W L D W L
5 Everton	14	7	6	1	22	13	+9	27	W W D D D
6 Tottenham Hotspur	14	7	3	4	13	15	-2	24	W D L L D
7 Newcastle United	14	7	2	5	19	21	-2	23	L W W W W
8 Southampton	14	6	4	4	18	13	+5	22	L L L W D
9 Manchester United	14	6	4	4	22	18	+4	22	L D D W W
10 Aston Villa	14	5	4	5	16	16	+0	19	W D D W D
11 Swansea City	14	5	3	6	20	19	+1	18	W L W D L
12 Hull City	14	5	2	7	12	18	-6	17	L W L L W
13 West Bromwich ...	14	3	6	5	17	19	-2	15	L L D D W
14 Stoke City	14	3	5	6	12	18	-6	14	D L W D D
15 Cardiff City	14	3	5	6	11	20	-9	14	D L D L W
16 Norwich City	14	4	2	8	12	28	-16	14	L W L W L
17 West Ham United	14	3	4	7	12	15	-3	13	L W L L D
18 Fulham	14	3	1	10	12	26	-14	10	L L L L L
19 Crystal Palace	14	3	1	10	8	22	-14	10	W L W D L
20 Sunderland	14	2	2	10	11	28	-17	8	L D L W L

Latest Results	Next Match
Crystal Palace 1 - 0 West Ham	Man Utd v Newcastle Utd
Arsenal 2 - 0 Hull City	Crystal Palace v Cardiff City
Liverpool 5 - 1 Norwich City	Liverpool v West Ham United
Man Utd 0 - 1 Everton	Southampton v Man City
Southampton 2 - 3 Aston Villa	Stoke City v Chelsea
Stoke City 0 - 0 Cardiff City	WBA v Norwich City
Sunderland 3 - 4 Chelsea	Sunderland v Tottenham
Swansea City 3 - 0 Newcastle	Arsenal v Everton
Fulham 1 - 2 Tottenham	Fulham v Aston Villa
WBA 2 - 3 Manchester City	Arsenal v Everton
	Swansea City v Hull City

One To Watch This Weekend...

Can Arsenal continue to lead the table? It faces Roberto Martinez's Everton at the Emirates in what is sure to be an enthralling encounter.

'Number ten' crucial to success in EPL and on the continent

The London Eye

Eddie Gray

The 4-2-3-1 formation has become one of the most popular in Europe.

This trend has spread to the Premier League and is now used by the majority of clubs in the English top flight.

A standard 4-4-2 is seen by many to leave teams too open, so managers have started putting an extra man in the midfield area to avoid being overrun.

Now, the 4-2-3-1 is the approach taken by most – no matter what the situation.

Arguably the most important position in the formation is the role of the 'number ten' – the player who sits in behind the main striker and also joins up with the midfield in defensive situations. We have seen Manchester United use Wayne Rooney in this role, Manchester City use Sergio Aguero, Chelsea have relied on Oscar and Arsenal have brilliantly exploited Mesut Ozil there to name just a few who frequently use the system.

Of those four teams, both Manchester clubs use a natural striker as their man to support the lead forward whereas the London sides use midfielders as their link; a very interesting difference.

In teams that dominate, like how Manchester United and City regularly do at home in the Premier League, the use of a two forwards in the same outfit is hugely effective. It automatically gives an attacking instinct to the team and provides another genuine top quality goal threat, especially in the case of Rooney and Aguero. As strikers they are predisposed to get into dangerous and penetrative positions that can hurt the opposition and is often the reason why they are so integral to their side's fortunes. Rooney has eight league goals and has set up five and his Argentinean counterpart tops the goal scoring charts in the league with ten and has accompanied that with four assists. It shows using a striker as a 'number ten' clearly works.

But the system also has its benefits with a midfielder in the role off the striker. Neither Arsenal or Chelsea have struggled for goals this season – The Gunners have hit the back of the net 27 times this year, the second highest in the division, whilst Jose Mourinho's team have netted 24 times. These two have used Ozil and Oscar respectively as their 'number ten' and both have been hugely inspirational in the attacking third. They have a guile and subtlety that allows them to drift in-between the lines of defence and midfield making them tough to pick up and mark closely. From there they can use their vision, pace, quickness of thought and passing ability to set up dangerous attacks and provide opportunities for those around them.

For the majority of domestic games these four sides are going to have a large percentage of possession and control proceedings against their opposition. This allows the 'number ten' to influence the game offensively and focus his efforts on creating and taking chances, making the difference between using a natural forward or midfielder off the striker minimal, because all of the players highlighted have undoubted attacking ability.

But it is when their sides are on the back foot that the difference is really seen.

Despite Aguero and Rooney tracking back admirably their natural instinct is to get forward. This can leave crucial gaps in the centre of the field and result in the opposition dominating the area of the pitch where most games are decided. Many times the strength of their own sides will help them get away with this numerical disadvantage in the middle but when it comes to the very big games it sets them back, especially in Europe where the opposition tend to be better suited to manipulating the ball and retaining possession.

Compare this to the tendencies of Ozil and Oscar. Although they are attacking players both will naturally drift deeper to collect the ball instead of wanting to run in behind. This benefits their teams hugely as it means they can outnumber other sides in midfield and get a strong grip on the game. Then, after establishing control, they can break from deep, often proving difficult to pick up, and affect proceedings in the final third. But it is the initial extra body in midfield that is so vital for England's best sides if they want to succeed on the continent.

Arsenal are a perfect example of this. Having been drawn one of the toughest Champions League groups possible many would have expected them to struggle; they haven't. Arsene Wenger's men top their table by three points with one game to play and only defeat to Napoli by three or more goals would see them eliminated. So far wins away to Borussia Dortmund and at home to Napoli have been particular highlights, and the Gunners have demonstrated against top opposition how crucial it is to control midfield. The effect of having an additional body that will naturally drop deep is there for all to see.

Yet, it's not impossible for the likes of United and City to be defensively strong in big games with a forward in-behind the striker. Against Arsenal, Rooney and Robin Van Perise dovetailed to great effect, with one always dropping back onto the deepest midfielder depending where the ball was, and this was rewarded with a clean sheet and a 1-0 victory.

But that was a very disciplined performance and something that cannot be replicated easily, especially when emotion strikes in the largest matches and the instincts of players take over.

That is why when faced with a crunch tie the 4-2-3-1 formation is best used without a forward in behind the front man. Games at the top level are won and lost in the middle of the pitch and if you can't keep the ball and get it to the strikers you are immediately on the back foot with two men out of the game.

And gaining success from there is almost impossible.

Smooth as Silk: Arsenal's Mesut Ozil plays the role of the number ten to a tee.

Serie A

Luca Cetta

Inter stumble under Thohir's gaze

Last Sunday was a big day for Inter. A day to celebrate their past and look ahead to the future. With new owner Erick Thohir making his San Siro debut, Walter Mazzarri's men were looking for maximum points against Sampdoria.

Indonesian businessman Thohir last month took ownership of up to 70 per cent of the Nerazzurri from Massimo Moratti, the man synonymous with Inter for the past two decades. Following 18 years at the helm Moratti now bears the title of Honourary President, after rejecting Thohir's request to become President.

Thohir is no stranger to sport ownership. He is part owner of the NBA side Philadelphia 76ers and MLS outfit DC United – which is now in partnership with Inter. In his native Indonesia he owns football club Persib Bandung.

But the idea of foreign ownership in Serie A is still, well foreign. It's something which has taken the English Premier League to great heights. There are few examples in Italy. Former Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi had a small stake in Juventus – Libya and the Agnelli family had long-standing ties. More recently, Roma were taken over by American investors, now led by James Pallotta.

New Inter Milan owner Erick Thohir

Either through business or family ties, those groups had a relationship with Italy. Thohir arrives as an outsider, but from a country with a huge Serie A following. Thohir told La Gazzetta dello Sport he became infatuated with the game growing up watching the World Cup. He also – somewhat surprisingly – said he admired former Inter striker Nicola Ventola. Surprising because Ventola did little at Inter, although less surprising given Ventola's wife is Indonesian. Thohir noted his son supports Juventus.

It's Thohir's aim to have Inter once again fighting for top honours. There's an added incentive – the San Siro has been chosen to host the 2016 Champions League Final. "We've already laid good foundations for the next two to three years," he said. "But Inter have got to be prepared for 2016 when the Champions League final will be in Milan. I have faith in Mazzarri and I thank Moratti for choosing him."

Those foundations Thohir speaks of were ones implemented post-Treble. Inter's squad needed rejuvenation, but their financial situation – Thohir will wipe out about €180m debt – hindered the process.

Unable to sign big names, Moratti turned to youth. Ricky Alvarez joined in 2011 and is now showing his worth. Others such as Mateo Kovacic, Mauro Icardi, Ishak Belfodil, Saphir Taider and Juan Jesus have the potential to get better, the former being the pick of the bunch. Meanwhile, Samir Handanovic is 'young' – 29 – in goalkeeping terms and one of Europe's best shot-stoppers.

This is the core Thohir hopes can lead Inter far. Although leading the team is Mazzarri - a conservative tactician, somebody who prefers experience. For example last season he was reluctant to field Napoli starlet Lorenzo Insigne on a constant basis.

Thohir's first live game was a friendly against Swiss side Chiasso during the international break. Inter lost 1-0. Not the best first impression. No matter, many of the squad were away and it was only a friendly.

He was home as Inter drew with Bologna. Fourth before meeting Sampdoria, Inter are well placed for a European return next campaign. But there's a long way to go. It certainly is a much improved team from last season. They've lost just once – to Roma – although five draws have hurt their charge.

Thohir was back in Italy late last week for his first San Siro contest, Inter versus Samp. Over 50 Nerazzurri legends were also in attendance. Thohir sat with Moratti. All were hoping for a good show. It's what Thohir wants.

"We're building a system and will choose the players the coach believes fit best in this squad, players who can delight the fans because it's important that we play attractive football," Thohir said. "You win games with your heart and if you give it all of your heart, then you can beat any opponents."

Another point of celebration was Javier Zanetti's first season start. Six months after snapping his Achilles tendon, the 40-year-old – Moratti's first signing back in 1995 – was on the field from the opening whistle.

There was another former Inter player present - not invited - new Sampdoria boss Sinisa Mihajlovic. His debut a week earlier was ruined as Lazio snatched a late draw, robbing struggling Samp of a much needed win.

Things started well for the home side. Just past the quarter hour Alvarez danced down the left and crossed for Fredy Guarin to smash home from close range. From there it was a lacklustre Inter. Mazzarri would later call it "our worst performance of the season."

They were made to pay as Renan – on as a substitute only minutes earlier – netted an 89th minute equaliser with a fine effort from distance. Mihajlovic said his team were superior and rather than two points from two games, should have six.

"It's my first match at San Siro and it would have been better to win obviously," sighed Thohir. "But I think we played very well in the first half. There is always a risk of being pegged back when you don't finish the game off and that's what happened."

Attention as far as the new owner goes, now turns to January. His first transfer window as owner will be eagerly anticipated. Already the rumours have started. Ezequiel Lavezzi, Pablo Osvaldo and Mirko Vucinic are linked. Thohir is also looking long term. "We want to expand the brand. San Siro is beautiful but it needs some improvements."

Before then he'll be back in Milan to watch the Derby della Madonnina against the Rossoneri. The perfect match to break the live drought.

ITALY Serie A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Juventus	14	12	1	1	29	10	+19	37	W W W W W
2 Roma	14	10	4	0	27	4	+23	34	D D D D W
3 Napoli	14	10	1	3	28	14	+14	31	W L L W W
4 Internazionale	14	7	6	1	31	14	+17	27	D D W W D
5 Fiorentina	14	8	3	3	28	18	+10	27	W L W W L
6 Hellas Verona	14	7	1	6	25	24	+1	22	L L L W W
7 Genoa	14	5	4	5	15	16	-1	19	D D W W W
8 Milan	14	4	5	5	21	21	+0	17	W D D L D
9 Lazio	14	4	5	5	19	21	-2	17	L D D L D
10 Parma	14	4	5	5	19	21	-2	17	D W D L L
11 Atalanta	14	5	2	7	15	18	-3	17	D L W L D
12 Torino	14	3	7	4	23	23	+0	16	D W L D D
13 Udinese	14	5	1	8	12	16	-4	16	L W L L W
14 Cagliari	14	3	6	5	15	22	-7	15	D D W L L
15 Sassuolo	14	3	5	6	17	30	-13	14	D W D W L
16 Chievo	14	3	3	8	11	18	-7	12	W W D D L
17 Bologna	14	2	6	6	16	26	-10	12	D D L D W
18 Livorno	14	3	3	8	13	23	-10	12	L L L W D
19 Sampdoria	14	2	5	7	15	24	-9	11	D D L L L
20 Catania	14	2	3	9	10	26	-16	9	L L W L L

Latest Results	Next Match
Parma 1 - 1 Bologna	Bologna v Juventus
Genoa 1 - 1 Torino	Livorno v Milan
Catania 1 - 3 Milan	Napoli v Udinese
Atalanta 1 - 1 Roma	Roma v Fiorentina
Cagliari 2 - 2 Sassuolo	Cagliari v Genoa
Chievo 3 - 0 Livorno	Hellas Verona v Atalanta
Inter 1 - 1 Sampdoria	Sampdoria v Catania
Juventus 1 - 0 Udinese	Sassuolo v Chievo
Fiorentina 4-3 Verona	Torino v Lazio
Lazio 2-4 Napoli	Inter v Parma

One To Watch This Weekend...

Roma have drawn four matches in succession, seeing their early lead turn into a three point deficit to Juventus. They must return to winning ways against Fiorentina, one of those sides fighting the Giallorossi for a top three position.

Viva Espana

Pepe Lopez

Alarm Bells As Barca Slump To 2nd Consecutive Defeat

Spanish Champions Barcelona FC have alarmingly slumped to their 2nd consecutive defeat in less than one calendar week of football.

Last week, Barca travelled to Amsterdam, where they were beaten 2-1 by Ajax and are now at risk of losing their seeded status in the round of 16 of the UEFA Champions League if they do not win their final group stage match against Celtic of Scotland. Just a few days later, Barcelona FC lost 1-0 away to Athletic Bilbao in the Spanish La Liga, which enabled 2nd place Atletico Madrid to join Barca on the same number of points at the top of the La Liga standings, and arch rivals Real Madrid to close their gap in 3rd place to just 3 points. The slump of form is alarming as Barca will be without star player Leo Messi until the new year, as he is recovering from a torn hamstring and 1st choice goalkeeper Victor Valdes for the same amount of time, who is recovering from a torn calf muscle.

Lightning struck twice for Barca with second consecutive defeat

FC Barcelona manager Gerardo Martino, in his 1st season in charge, is starting to show some signs of stress with a snappy post match press conference in Bilbao;

"There's nothing alarming. You (media) analyse things based on results and our last two results have been negative."

Speaking to press at the Spanish La Liga awards night, Barcelona FC midfielder Andres Iniesta had this to say about Barca's form;

"This is a race and we know we have to stand up and try to be better. But there is not even an iota of confidence less than we had two weeks ago. I am a person who does not like extremes, in either a good or a bad way. I like to see things with perspective and balance. There is always concern when you lose but we are trying to make things right. Nobody likes to lose, get things wrong or perform less well, but we must have the confidence that what we are doing has improved and what lies ahead will be positive. Sometimes things do not turn out the way you want them to, not due to the lack of anything, simply because of circumstances that do not allow things to go your way. In a team game responsibilities fall on all of us to use our solidarity and character to improve."

In further bad news for Barcelona FC, Andres Iniesta is now also in danger of missing game time with a hamstring complaint of his own. Iniesta missed training after the loss away to Bilbao, and would be a major loss for the Catalan club in their upcoming crucial UEFA Champions League tie against Celtic.

Meanwhile Madrid based sports newspaper Marca, were quick to sensationalise the fact that Barca FC have yet to win a match in their new away shirt this season, and claimed the shirt to be cursed. Barcelona FC this season released an away strip in the "Senyera" flag colours of 4 red stripes on a golden background. This is the recognised flag for the Spanish Autonomous communities of Catalonia, Aragon, The Balearic Islands and Valencia. Whilst the away strip proved very popular amongst Barcelona's supporters of Catalan heritage it has polarised supporters between those who support Barca as a political movement, and those in Spain who merely enjoy their brand of football.

Betis announce Garrido to replace Mel

Juan Carlos Garrido will take the reins of Real Betis' first team, after Pepe Mel was sacked from the La Liga club on Monday.

The former Villarreal and Club Brugge boss, 44, has been empowered to lead the cellar-dwellers of the Spanish top flight up the table - with Betis accruing just 10 points from their first 15 games this season.

Mel's release was announced at 9pm local time in Seville on Monday, with enraged fans rallying behind their now former boss and taking aim at the club for their poor fortunes this season.

SPAIN La Liga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games (Most recent first)
1 Barcelona	15	13	1	1	42	9	+33	40	L W W W W
2 Atlético Madrid	15	13	1	1	40	9	+31	40	W W D W W
3 Real Madrid	15	12	1	2	44	17	+27	37	W W W W W
4 Athletic Club	15	9	2	4	23	19	+4	29	W W W L D
5 Villarreal	15	8	4	3	25	14	+11	28	D W D W L
6 Real Sociedad	15	6	5	4	25	21	+4	23	W W L W D
7 Getafe	15	7	2	6	18	21	-3	23	W L D L W
8 Sevilla	15	6	4	5	29	27	+2	22	W W W L L
9 Valencia	15	6	2	7	21	23	-2	20	W L D W L
10 Espanyol	15	5	3	7	18	21	-3	18	L W L L D
11 Elche	15	4	5	6	15	20	-5	17	L W D L D
12 Granada	15	5	2	8	12	19	-7	17	L L W W L
13 Levante	15	4	5	6	13	21	-8	17	L L L L D
14 Celta de Vigo	15	4	3	8	20	23	-3	15	W L L W L
15 Málaga	15	3	5	7	17	22	-5	14	D L L W D
16 Osasuna	15	4	1	10	11	25	-14	13	L W L L W
17 Rayo Vallecano	15	4	1	10	15	36	-21	13	D L W L L
18 Real Valladolid	15	2	6	7	16	25	-9	12	L L D L D
19 Almería	15	3	3	9	16	32	-16	12	L L W W W
20 Real Betis	15	2	4	9	14	30	-16	10	D L L L D

Latest Results	Next Match
Getafe 1 - 0 Levante	Levante v Elche
Villarreal 1 - 1 Málaga	Osasuna v Real Madrid
Elche 0 - 2 Atlético Madrid	Rayo Vallecano v Granada
Celta de Vigo 3 - 1 Almería	Barcelona v Villarreal
Real Madrid 4 - 0 R Valladolid	Málaga v Getafe
Espanyol 1 - 2 R Sociedad	Almería v Espanyol
Real Betis 2 - 2 Rayo Vallecano	R Sociedad v R Betis
Granada 1 - 2 Sevilla	Sevilla v Athletic Club
Valencia 3 - 0 Osasuna	Atlético Madrid v Valencia
Athletic Club 1 - 0 Barcelona	R Valladolid v Celta Vigo

One To Watch This Weekend...

There are no Spanish La Liga fixtures this weekend, this is due to the fact that this weekend has been reserved for the Spanish Cup "Copa Del Rey" Round of 32 1st Legs.

Holders Atletico Madrid will travel to Barcelona to take on UE Sant Andreu from Spain's third tier, Segunda B at 2am, December 8, AEST.

Barcelona FC will travel to Cartagena in Spain's Murcia region to take on FC Cartagena from Spain's third tier, Segunda B at 8am, December 7, AEST.

Real Madrid will travel to Valencia to take on Olimpic De Xativa from Spain's third tier, Segunda B at 8am, December 8, AEST.

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CROATIA 1.HNL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Dinamo Zagreb	16	11	3	2	26	9	+17	36	W W W L W
2 Hajduk Split	17	10	5	2	30	13	+17	35	D W D W W
3 Rijeka	15	8	5	2	26	11	+15	29	L W W L D
4 Lokomotiva	16	9	2	5	27	20	+7	29	W L L W L
5 Split	17	7	6	4	18	15	+3	27	D D W W W
6 Istra 1961	16	5	4	7	18	23	-5	19	L D D L W
7 Zadar	17	4	4	9	13	25	-12	16	D L W L L
8 Slaven Koprivnica	17	3	6	8	20	24	-4	15	D L D D W
9 Osijek	17	2	4	11	11	35	-24	10	D D D L L
10 Hrvatski Drago…	16	1	5	10	12	26	-14	8	D L L L L

SCOTLAND SPL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Celtic	13	10	3	0	30	12	+18	33	W W D W D
2 Inverness CT	13	9	1	3	21	11	+10	28	W W W L L
3 Motherwell	14	8	1	5	16	18	-2	25	W L W L W
4 Dundee United	14	6	5	3	25	10	+15	23	W W D W L
5 Aberdeen	14	7	2	5	20	14	+6	23	L L W W W
6 St. Johnstone	14	6	3	5	22	15	+7	21	L W W W L
7 Hibernian	14	4	4	6	9	14	-5	16	D L L L D
8 St. Mirren	13	4	3	6	14	21	-7	15	D W W L W
9 Partick Thistle	14	3	4	7	12	24	-12	13	L L L L W
10 Ross County	13	3	2	8	15	27	-12	11	D L L L W
11 Kilmarnock	14	2	3	9	14	23	-9	9	L L L W W
12 Heart of Midlo…	14	3	3	8	12	21	-9	-3	D W L L L

SERBIA Super Liga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Partizan	14	9	3	2	27	12	+15	30	W W W L D
2 Crvena Zvezda	14	9	2	3	28	14	+14	29	W W W W D
3 Radnički Niš	14	6	6	2	16	9	+7	24	W L W W D
4 Jagodina	14	7	3	4	18	12	+6	24	W W L W W
5 Vojvodina	14	6	6	2	19	15	+4	24	W L D D W
6 Čukarički	14	6	4	4	14	12	+2	22	L D W L L
7 Novi Pazar	14	6	3	5	17	16	+1	21	L D W W W
8 Spartak Subotica	14	6	2	6	12	19	-7	20	L W L W D
9 Napredak	14	4	4	6	19	18	+1	16	L W L L D
10 Voždovac	14	4	4	6	13	15	-2	16	W L L L W
11 Radnički Kragu…	14	4	4	6	15	20	-5	16	W D L D D
12 OFK Beograd	14	5	1	8	16	23	-7	16	L L W W L
13 Javor Ivanjica	14	3	5	6	14	19	-5	14	L D D L W
14 Donji Srem	14	3	4	7	14	18	-4	13	W W L L L
15 Sloboda Užice	14	3	4	7	11	19	-8	13	L L W L L
16 Rad Beograd	14	3	1	10	6	18	-12	10	

GERMANY Bundesliga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Bayern München	14	12	2	0	32	7	+25	38	W W W W W
2 Bayer Leverkusen	14	11	1	2	31	14	+17	34	W W W L W
3 Borussia Dortmund	14	10	1	3	35	15	+20	31	W L L W W
4 Borussia M'gla…	14	9	1	4	31	16	+15	28	W W W W W
5 Schalke 04	14	7	3	4	29	26	+3	24	W D W W L
6 Wolfsburg	14	7	2	5	20	16	+4	23	D D W W W
7 Hertha BSC	14	5	4	5	20	17	+3	19	D L W L L
8 Mainz 05	14	6	1	7	21	28	-7	19	L W W L W
9 Hannover 96	14	5	2	7	17	22	-5	17	W L D L L
10 Augsburg	14	5	2	7	15	23	-8	17	D W L W L
11 Hamburger SV	14	4	4	6	30	31	-1	16	D W L L W
12 Stuttgart	14	4	4	6	24	26	-2	16	L L W L D
13 Werder Bremen	14	4	4	6	19	27	-8	16	D L L W L
14 Hoffenheim	14	3	5	6	32	34	-2	14	D L L L W
15 Eintracht Fran…	14	2	5	7	17	26	-9	11	L D L L L
16 Freiburg	14	2	5	7	14	25	-11	11	L W L W L
17 Nürnberg	14	0	8	6	13	29	-16	8	L D L L D
18 Eintracht Brau…	14	2	2	10	8	26	-18	8	L L D W L

HOLLAND Eredivisie

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Vitesse	15	9	3	3	31	18	+13	30	W W W W D
2 Ajax	15	8	4	3	33	15	+18	28	W W W L D
3 Twente	15	7	6	2	35	15	+20	27	W W D D L
4 Feyenoord	15	7	3	5	30	23	+7	24	W L D W L
5 Groningen	15	6	6	3	30	27	+3	24	D D W D D
6 AZ	15	7	3	5	27	24	+3	24	L D D W W
7 Heerenveen	14	6	4	4	33	27	+6	22	W D W L L
8 PEC Zwolle	15	5	7	3	23	15	+8	22	D D D D L
9 Utrecht	15	6	3	6	22	27	-5	21	W W L W L
10 PSV	15	5	5	5	26	18	+8	20	L D L D L
11 NAC Breda	15	5	4	6	26	25	+1	19	D L W L W
12 Roda JC	15	4	6	5	25	32	-7	18	L D L D W
13 Go Ahead Eagles	14	4	4	6	21	35	-14	16	L L W L D
14 Cambuur	15	4	3	8	13	21	-8	15	L W L L W
15 Heracles	14	4	2	8	17	27	-10	14	L L L W D
16 RKC Waalwijk	15	3	4	8	20	30	-10	13	D W L W D
17 ADO Den Haag	14	4	1	9	17	34	-17	13	L L W L W
18 NEC	15	2	6	7	23	39	-16	12	W L L D W

TURKEY Süper Lig

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Fenerbahçe	13	10	2	1	31	15	+16	32	D W W W W
2 Kasımpaşa	13	8	2	3	27	15	+12	26	D D W W W
3 Beşiktaş	13	7	4	2	24	14	+10	25	D W W D D
4 Galatasaray	13	6	5	2	20	14	+6	23	D W L W W
5 Trabzonspor	13	7	2	4	18	13	+5	23	W W L W L
6 Sivasspor	13	7	1	5	23	18	+5	22	L L W W W
7 Eskişehirspor	13	6	2	5	16	10	+6	20	D L W L W
8 Bursaspor	13	5	3	5	14	16	-2	18	W D L L W
9 Antalyaspor	13	4	5	4	15	13	+2	17	W L L D D
10 Karabükspor	13	4	5	4	10	11	-1	17	D W W D D
11 Akhisar Beledi…	13	4	4	5	13	13	+0	16	D L L D D
12 Rizespor	12	4	3	5	15	17	-2	15	L L D L D
13 Gaziantepspor	13	4	2	7	17	26	-9	14	W W L L L
14 Gençlerbirliği	13	4	1	8	13	17	-4	13	L L W W W
15 Konyaspor	12	4	1	7	13	19	-6	13	L W L L D
16 Kayseri Erciye…	13	3	3	7	9	18	-9	12	L W W L L
17 Kayserispor	13	2	4	7	11	21	-10	10	D W L D L

THE CHAMPIONSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Leicester City	18	12	2	4	30	18	+12	38	L W W L W
2 Queens Park Ra…	18	11	5	2	22	10	+12	38	W L W D W
3 Burnley	18	10	6	2	29	13	+16	36	D L D D D
4 Derby County	18	9	4	5	35	25	+10	31	W W W W L
5 Reading	18	8	7	3	27	20	+7	31	W W D D L
6 Blackpool	18	8	7	3	22	16	+6	31	L W D L W
7 Leeds United	18	9	2	7	26	20	+6	29	W L W W W
8 Nottingham Forest	18	7	7	4	28	22	+6	28	D L D W L
9 Ipswich Town	18	7	5	6	28	23	+5	26	W W L W D
10 Huddersfield Town	18	7	5	6	24	21	+3	26	W W W L L
11 Brighton & Hov…	18	6	7	5	21	17	+4	25	L D W W W
12 Watford	18	6	6	6	27	24	+3	24	D L L D L
13 Blackburn Rovers	18	6	5	7	22	22	+0	23	L W D L W
14 Wigan Athletic	17	6	4	7	18	18	+0	22	L L L W W
15 Doncaster Rovers	18	5	5	8	17	28	-11	20	D W L W D
16 Middlesbrough	18	4	7	7	28	28	+0	19	L W L D L
17 Birmingham City	18	5	4	9	22	24	-2	19	D W D W L
18 Bolton Wanderers	18	4	7	7	17	23	-6	19	L L W W W
19 AFC Bournemouth	18	5	4	9	22	35	-13	19	L D L D L
20 Millwall	18	4	6	8	21	36	-15	18	D L W L D
21 Charlton Athletic	18	4	5	9	14	21	-7	17	L L W L L
22 Yeovil Town	18	4	3	11	14	24	-10	15	W W L L L
23 Sheffield Wedn…	17	2	8	7	20	28	-8	14	W L L L W
24 Barnsley	18	3	5	10	18	36	-18	14	W L L D D

LEAGUE ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Leyton Orient	19	13	4	2	42	17	+25	43	D D W L W
2 Wolverhampton …	19	13	4	2	32	11	+21	43	L W D W D
3 Preston North End	19	10	7	2	28	17	+11	37	W W D W D
4 Brentford	19	11	4	4	29	19	+10	37	W W D W W
5 Peterborough U…	19	11	2	6	28	18	+10	35	W L L L L
6 Rotherham United	19	8	7	4	31	23	+8	31	W W D W D
7 Swindon Town	19	9	3	7	35	25	+10	30	W D L W W
8 Bradford City	19	7	8	4	32	21	+11	29	D D W D D
9 Port Vale	19	9	2	8	28	28	+0	29	W L W W L
10 Walsall	19	7	6	6	20	18	+2	27	L D D W L
11 Coventry City	19	10	4	5	41	34	+7	24	W L L D W
12 Milton Keynes Dons	18	6	4	8	28	29	-1	22	L L L W L
13 Shrewsbury Town	19	5	7	7	21	22	-1	22	W L W L W
14 Oldham Athletic	18	6	4	8	23	25	-2	22	D W W D L
15 Crawley Town	19	5	7	7	19	24	-5	22	L D D D L
16 Colchester United	19	4	9	6	21	26	-5	21	L W D L D
17 Gillingham	19	6	3	10	24	32	-8	21	L W L W W
18 Carlisle United	19	5	6	8	19	32	-13	21	L W D D D
19 Tranmere Rovers	19	5	5	9	23	34	-11	20	W L W D D
20 Sheffield United	19	4	5	10	17	27	-10	17	D D W L L
21 Stevenage	19	5	2	12	19	32	-13	17	L L W L L
22 Crewe Alexandra	19	4	4	11	15	40	-25	16	W L L L D
23 Bristol City	19	2	9	8	26	32	-6	15	L D L D W
24 Notts County	19	3	2	14	18	33	-15	11	L D L L L

LEAGUE TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Oxford United	19	9	7	3	30	15	+15	34	D D W W L
2 Southend United	19	10	3	6	25	17	+8	33	D W W W W
3 Chesterfield	19	9	6	4	27	17	+10	33	L D W W D
4 Scunthorpe United	19	9	6	4	26	21	+5	33	W W W L D
5 Rochdale	19	10	3	6	28	25	+3	33	D L W W L
6 Burton Albion	19	10	3	6	23	20	+3	33	W W W L L
7 Fleetwood Town	19	10	2	7	32	24	+8	32	D L W L W
8 Newport County	19	8	7	4	27	21	+6	31	W D D W L
9 Dagenham & Red…	19	8	6	5	28	23	+5	30	W D L W L
10 Morecambe	19	8	5	6	25	26	-1	29	W D L L W
11 Exeter City	19	7	5	7	24	25	-1	26	D D L L L
12 AFC Wimbledon	19	7	5	7	23	24	-1	26	L D D W W
13 Hartlepool United	19	7	4	8	21	20	+1	25	D L W L W
14 Cheltenham Town	19	5	8	6	24	29	-5	23	D D D W D
15 Plymouth Argyle	19	6	5	8	14	19	-5	23	L D W D W
16 Wycombe Wander	18	6	4	8	22	24	-2	22	L D L L D
17 Portsmouth	18	5	6	7	25	30	-5	21	D L L L W
18 Mansfield Town	19	5	6	8	21	26	-5	21	L L L L L
19 Accrington Stanley	19	5	5	9	18	24	-6	20	L W W W D
20 Bury	19	4	7	8	21	24	-3	19	D W D D L
21 York City	19	4	7	8	23	27	-4	19	D D L D D
22 Bristol Rovers	19	4	7	8	16	20	-4	19	W D L D W
23 Northampton Town	19	4	5	10	15	24	-9	17	W D L W L
24 Torquay United	19	3	6	10	20	33	-13	15	L D L L W

Greece Super League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Olympiakos Piraeus	13	12	1	0	41	4	+37	37	W W W W W
2 PAOK	12	9	1	2	23	12	+11	28	W L W W W
3 Atromitos	13	6	4	3	19	11	+8	22	D W L D W
4 Asteras Tripolis	13	5	6	2	21	14	+7	21	W W D D W
5 Panathinaikos	13	6	3	4	17	13	+4	21	D W W L W
6 Xanthi	13	5	3	5	17	19	-2	18	D W D L L
7 Kalloni	13	6	0	7	15	20	-5	18	L W W W L
8 Panaitolikos	13	4	5	4	14	13	+1	17	L L W D W
9 Ergotelis	13	4	5	4	14	14	+0	17	L L W L L
10 PAS Giannina	12	5	2	5	14	15	-1	17	L W W D L
11 Panionios	13	4	4	5	14	17	-3	16	D L W L W
12 OFI	13	3	6	4	12	15	-3	15	W W L W L
13 Panthrakikos	13	3	6	4	15	21	-6	15	D L L D L
14 Levadiakos	13	4	2	7	15	25	-10	14	L W L W L
15 Platanias	13	2	6	5	12	17	-5	12	D L W L W
16 Veria	13	2	4	7	12	23	-11	10	W L L D D
17 Apollon Smirnis	13	2	3	8	12	22	-10	9	D L L D L
18 Aris	13	2	3	8	9	21	-12	9	D L L L L

France Ligue 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 PSG	15	11	4	0	34	8	+26	37	W W W W D
2 Lille	15	10	3	2	17	4	+13	33	W W D W W
3 Monaco	15	9	5	1	24	11	+13	32	W W D L W
4 Olympique Mars…	15	8	3	4	23	14	+9	27	W W W D L
5 Saint-Étienne	15	7	3	5	23	17	+6	24	W W L D D
6 Nantes	15	7	2	6	19	12	+7	23	L L W D L
7 Guingamp	15	6	4	5	18	15	+3	22	W D D L W
8 Bastia	15	6	4	5	18	20	-2	22	W D W L W
9 Bordeaux	15	5	6	4	21	18	+3	21	W D L W W
10 Olympique Lyonnai	15	5	4	6	20	21	-1	19	L D W W L
11 Reims	15	4	7	4	15	19	-4	19	L L D W W
12 Toulouse	15	5	4	6	16	21	-5	19	W L D L L
13 Rennes	15	4	6	5	17	16	+1	18	L D L D W
14 Lorient	15	5	2	8	18	23	-5	17	W W D L W
15 Nice	15	5	2	8	14	20	-6	17	L L L L L
16 Evian TG	15	4	4	7	15	27	-12	16	L L D W W
17 Montpellier	15	2	9	4	17	20	-3	15	L D D D L
18 Valenciennes	15	2	4	9	12	22	-10	10	L D D W L
19 Ajaccio	15	1	5	9	10	26	-16	8	L L D L L
20 Sochaux	15	1	5	9	13	30	-17	8	L D L D L

Portugal Premeira Liga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Sporting CP	11	8	2	1	28	9	+19	26	W W W L W
2 Benfica	11	8	2	1	20	8	+12	26	W W W W W
3 Porto	11	7	3	1	20	8	+12	24	L D D W W
4 Gil Vicente	11	5	3	3	13	11	+2	18	D L W W W
5 Estoril	10	5	2	3	18	14	+4	17	W L W L W
6 Nacional	11	4	4	3	15	12	+3	16	D D D L W
7 Sporting Braga	11	5	0	6	13	13	+0	15	W L L L L
8 Académica	11	4	2	5	6	13	-7	14	W W L W L
9 Vitória Guimarães	10	4	1	5	9	10	-1	13	L L W W L
10 Rio Ave	11	4	1	6	9	12	-3	13	L L W L W
11 Marítimo	11	4	1	6	18	22	-4	13	W W L L L
12 Vitória Setúbal	11	3	4	4	15	19	-4	13	D W W D L
13 Belenenses	11	2	4	5	9	13	-4	10	D L D D W
14 Olhanense	11	2	3	6	6	15	-9	9	L L D W L
15 Arouca	11	2	2	7	6	15	-9	8	L L D L L
16 Paços de Ferreira	11	2	2	7	9	20	-11	8	L W D L L

European Results

THE CHAMPIONSHIP
Sheffield Wedn… 2 - 1 Leicester City
Brighton & Hov… 1 - 2 Barnsley
Ipswich Town 3 - 1 Blackburn Rovers
Birmingham City 1 - 1 Doncaster Rovers
Queens Park Ra… 3 - 0 AFC Bournemouth
Millwall 2 - 2 Nottingham Forest
Yeovil Town 1 - 0 Blackpool
Burnley 0 - 0 Watford
Bolton Wanderers 0 - 1 Huddersfield Town
Reading 1 - 0 Charlton Athletic
Derby County 2 - 1 Middlesbrough
Leeds United 2 - 0 Wigan Athletic

ENGLISH LEAGUE ONE
Tranmere Rovers 2 - 1 Colchester United
Crewe Alexandra 1 - 0 Crawley Town
Leyton Orient 1 - 1 Sheffield United
Rotherham United 4 - 1 Gillingham
Peterborough U… 1 - 0 Wolverhampton
Milton Keynes Dons 1 - 3 Coventry City
Walsall 0 - 2 Port Vale
Stevenage 1 - 3 Shrewsbury Town
Notts County 0 - 1 Brentford
Preston North End 1 - 0 Bristol City
Swindon Town 3 - 1 Carlisle United
Oldham Athletic 1 - 1 Bradford City

ENGLISH LEAGUE TWO
Mansfield Town 1 - 2 Morecambe
York City 0 - 0 Rochdale
Bristol Rovers 3 - 0 AFC Wimbledon
Southend United 1 - 1 Cheltenham Town
Dagenham & Red… 2 - 0 Wycombe Wanderers
Fleetwood Town 1 - 1 Oxford United
Scunthorpe United 3 - 1 Torquay United
Northampton Town 1 - 0 Accrington Stanley
Exeter City 2 - 2 Bury
Hartlepool United 0 - 0 Portsmouth
Plymouth Argyle 0 - 1 Burton Albion
Newport County 3 - 2 Chesterfield
Portsmouth v Wycombe Wanderers

CROATIA
Osijek 1 - 1 Hrvatski Drago…
Zadar 0 - 4 Istra 1961
Split 3 - 0 Lokomotiva
Dinamo Zagreb 2 - 2 Hajduk Split
Rijeka 2 - 2 Slaven Koprivnica
Rijeka v Hrvatski Drago…

FRANCE
Olympique Mars… 2 - 0 Montpellier
Saint-Étienne 4 - 0 Reims
Monaco 2 - 0 Rennes
Guingamp 1 - 0 Nantes
Lorient 3 - 0 Nice
Toulouse 5 - 1 Sochaux
Valenciennes 0 - 1 Lille
Bordeaux 4 - 0 Ajaccio
Bastia 2 - 0 Evian TG
PSG 4 - 0 Olympique Lyonnais

GERMANY
Werder Bremen 2 - 3 Mainz 05
Wolfsburg 1 - 1 Hamburger SV
Bayern München 2 - 0 Eintracht Brau…
Bayer Leverkusen 3 - 0 Nürnberg
Hoffenheim 4 - 4 Werder Bremen
Mainz 05 1 - 3 Borussia Dortmund
Hertha BSC 0 - 0 Augsburg
Schalke 04 3 - 0 Stuttgart
Hannover 96 2 - 0 Eintracht Fran…
Borussia M'gla… 1 - 0 Freiburg

GREECE
Levadiakos 2 - 0 Panionios
Asteras Tripolis 3 - 0 Panaitolikos
Platanias 1 - 1 Atromitos
Apollon Smirnis 1 - 1 Panathinaikos
Aris 2 - 2 Panthrakikos
Panionios 0 - 0 Xanthi
Veria 4 - 3 Levadiakos
OFI 3 - 1 Kalloni
Olympiakos Piraeus 3 - 0 Ergotelis
PAS Giannina v PAOK

HOLLAND
Roda JC 1 - 2 Twente
PEC Zwolle 1 - 1 RKC Waalwijk
Heerenveen 3 - 1 Go Ahead Eagles
NAC Breda 2 - 2 Groningen
Heracles 1 - 2 Utrecht
ADO Den Haag 0 - 4 Ajax
Feyenoord 3 - 1 PSV
Vitesse 3 - 0 Cambuur
NEC 3 - 2 AZ

PORTUGAL
Sporting Braga 4 - 1 Olhanense
Académica 1 - 0 Porto
Arouca 1 - 2 Marítimo
Belenenses 0 - 0 Gil Vicente
Nacional 2 - 2 Vitória Setúbal
Rio Ave 1 - 3 Benfica
Sporting CP 4 - 0 Paços de Ferreira
Estoril v Vitória Guimarães

SCOTLAND (Scottish Cup)
Dundee United 5 - 2 Kilmarnock
Falkirk 0 - 2 Rangers
Albion Rovers 1 - 0 Motherwell
Berwick Rangers 1 - 3 Dumbarton
Clyde 1 - 1 Stranraer
Queen of the South 2 - 2 St. Mirren
Stenhousemuir 3 - 0 Fraserburgh
Brechin City 1 - 1 Forfar Athletic
Alloa Athletic 3 - 2 Stirling Albion
Ross County 0 - 1 Hibernian
Dundee 0 - 1 Raith Rovers
St. Johnstone 2 - 0 Livingston
Ayr United 1 - 1 Dunfermline At…
Inverness CT 4 - 0 Greenock Morton
Partick Thistle 0 - 1 Aberdeen
Heart of Midlo… 0 - 7 Celtic

SERBIA
Radnički Kragu… 2 - 0 Novi Pazar
OFK Beograd 1 - 2 Crvena Zvezda
Javor Ivanjica 0 - 1 Jagodina
Radnički Niš 1 - 0 Čukarički
Partizan 2 - 0 Spartak Subotica
Sloboda Užice 0 - 1 Donji Srem
Vojvodina 3 - 1 Napredak
Rad Beograd 0 - 2 Voždovac

TURKEY
Sivasspor 0 - 3 Antalyaspor
Elazığspor 1 - 2 Bursaspor
Kayserispor 0 - 0 Akhisar Beledi…
Gençlerbirliği 1 - 3 Gaziantepspor
Fenerbahçe 3 - 3 Beşiktaş
Trabzonspor 3 - 1 Kayseri Erciye…
Eskişehirspor 0 - 0 Karabükspor
Kasımpaşa 1 - 1 Galatasaray
Konyaspor v Rizespor

One Game At A Time

France
Lille v Olympique Mars…
Nantes v Valenciennes
Nice v Monaco
Ajaccio v Bastia
Guingamp v Bordeaux
Montpellier v Lorient
Rennes v Saint-Étienne
Sochaux v Reims
Evian TG v PSG
Olympique Lyonnais v Toulouse

Germany
Nürnberg v Mainz 05
Borussia M'gla… v Schalke 04
Stuttgart v Hannover 96
Werder Bremen v Bayern München
Hamburger SV v Augsburg
Eintracht Fran… v Hoffenheim
Borussia Dortmund v Bayer Leverkusen
Freiburg v Wolfsburg
Eintracht Brau… v Hertha BSC

Croatia
Split v Slaven Koprivnica
Hrvatski Drago… v Lokomotiva
Dinamo Zagreb v Osijek
Rijeka v Istra 1961
Zadar v Hajduk Split

Serbia
Jagodina v Radnički Kragu…
Napredak v Javor Ivanjica
Crvena Zvezda v Vojvodina
Donji Srem v OFK Beograd
Voždovac v Sloboda Užice
Spartak Subotica v Rad Beograd
Čukarički v Partizan
Novi Pazar v Radnički Niš

English Championship
Derby County v Blackpool
Brighton & Hov… v Leicester City
Birmingham City v Middlesbrough
Bolton Wanderers v Doncaster Rovers
Leeds United v Watford
Reading v AFC Bournemouth
Ipswich Town v Huddersfield Town
Yeovil Town v Charlton Athletic
Burnley v Barnsley
Sheffield Wedn… v Nottingham Forest
Millwall v Wigan Athletic
QPR v Blackburn Rovers

English League One
Notts County v Gillingham
Shrewsbury Town v Walsall
Port Vale v Stevenage
Colchester United v Notts County
Gillingham v Peterborough U…
Bradford City v Leyton Orient
Coventry City v Crewe Alexandra
Wolverhampton … v Milton Keynes Dons
Bristol City v Rotherham United
Crawley Town v Preston North End
Carlisle United v Tranmere Rovers
Brentford v Oldham Athletic

English League Two
Mansfield Town v Morecambe
York City v Rochdale
Bristol Rovers v FC Wimbledon
Southend United vCheltenham Town
Dagenham & Red… v Wycombe Wanderers
Fleetwood Town v Oxford United
Scunthorpe United v Torquay United
Northampton Town v Accrington Stanley
Exeter City v Bury
Hartlepool United v Portsmouth
Plymouth Argyle v Burton Albion

Scotland
Motherwell v Celtic
Dundee United v Heart of Midlo…
Hibernian v Partick Thistle
Ross County v Kilmarnock
St. Johnstone v Aberdeen
St. Mirren v Inverness CT

Greece
Ergotelis v Aris
Levadiakos v Platanias
Olympiakos Piraeus v Asteras Tripolis
PAOK v Apollon Smirnis
Xanthi v Veria
Panthrakikos v PAS Giannina
Atromitos v OFI
Kalloni v Panathinaikos
Panaitolikos v Panionios

Turkey
Galatasaray v Elazığspor
Antalyaspor v Kasımpaşa
Rizespor v Fenerbahçe
Akhisar Beledi… v Konyaspor
Bursaspor v Gençlerbirliği
Karabükspor v Kayserispor
Gaziantepspor v Trabzonspor
Beşiktaş v Sivasspor
Kayseri Erciye… v Eskişehirspor

Holland
ADO Den Haag v Heerenveen
Go Ahead Eagles v Heracles
Utrecht v NEC
Ajax v NAC Breda
AZ v Twente
RKC Waalwijk v Cambuur
PSV v Vitesse
Heerenveen v Feyenoord
Go Ahead Eagles v PEC Zwolle
Groningen v ADO Den Haag
Roda JC v Heracles

Portugal
Benfica v Arouca
Paços de Ferreira v Estoril
Vitória Guimarães v Belenenses
Porto v Sporting Braga
Marítimo v Nacional
Olhanense v Rio Ave
Gil Vicente v Sporting CP
Vitória Setúbal v Académica

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